J. Reginald Mitchell, O.P.

CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

A Rational Exposition and Defense of the Catholic Religion

BY

REV. W. DEVIVIER, S.J.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH WORK,
EDITED AND AUGMENTED

BY

REV. JOSEPH C. SASIA, S.J.
Author of "THE FUTURE LIFE"

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GOD

THE HUMAN SOUL

RELIGION

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To

AMERICAN CATHOLIC YOUTH

ANXIOUS TO PRESERVE INTACT

THEIR GREATEST SPIRITUAL TREASURE,

CATHOLIC FAITH,

AND TO KNOW HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY DEFEND IT,

THIS WORK AS A GUIDE AND HELP

IN THEIR STUDY OF RELIGION

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY THE EDITOR

Roman Approval of "Christian Apologetics."

Letter of Cardinal Secretary of State.

ROME, January 13, 1904

REV. JOSEPH C. SASIA, S.J.,

Reverend Father:

With pleasure I hastened to place in the venerable hands of the Holy Father the work of Devivier's "Christian Apologetics," edited by your Reverence in the English language. His Holiness received the gift with feelings of deep satisfaction, congratulating you for having dedicated your talent to make better and better known, and to spread more and more the truths and beauties of the Catholic Religion.

He expressed the earnest hope that the work you published may produce most abundant fruits, particularly among the people of the American Commonwealth, and thus lead an ever increasing number of souls to the true love and the true Faith of Jesus Christ. And with a view that the good wishes of His Holiness may be fully realized, and you may have a pledge of the special benevolence that he cherishes in your regard, he imparts to you his apostolic benediction.

As to myself, whilst thanking your Reverence most cordially for the copy you presented to me, I cheerfully profit by this occasion to declare myself with sentiments of particular esteem,

Yours truly in our Lord,

R. CARDINAL MERRY DEL VAL.

The above is a faithful translation of the Italian original submitted to me.

P. W. RIORDAN,

February 8, 1904. Archbishop of San Francisco.

FOREWORD TO THE SECOND EDITION

The first edition of this work, comprising five thousand copies, printed in San Jose, California, by the Popp and Hogan Publishing Company, in 1903, having been for some years exhausted, a new issue is published in compliance with numerous requests received by the editor from prominent Catholic Educators and from Rectors of Seminaries, Colleges and Academies in the United States and elsewhere. As indicated on the title page, the book is a translation of the Cours Apologétique of Father Devivier, S.J., which met with a noteworthy success in both Belgium and France, as it reached its twentieth edition within the space of a few years. It was approved and highly praised by six Cardinals, thirty-two Archbishops and Bishops, and by the Catholic Press of both countries.

The present English translation made from the sixteenth edition of the French original has been likewise well received by the general public and particularly by the members of the Catholic Hierarchy of the United States, as is evidenced by the letters addressed to the Editor by five Archbishops and by fifteen Bishops. Several Catholic Publications in this country, in England, Ireland and Canada have made very favorable criticisms and have recommended the Course as a suitable Text-book for use in our Catholic Colleges and Universities. But a most agreeable surprise was the receipt of a letter from His Eminence, Cardinal Merry del Val, addressed to the Editor, January 13, 1904, by order of His Holiness, P. Pius X, *felicis memoriæ*. The letter appears in this new edition.

The work is intended primarily for the general reader and has not been written exclusively as a Text-book in Evidences of Religion for upper-class students in our Catholic Institutions. It may, however, be adapted to such purpose as a four-year Course in the Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior College-classes. In this case, the Deans of Studies, in apportioning matter to the respective classes, will not follow

the logical order of the successive Chapters of the two Volumes, but rather the order of the students' mental development. Hence, Parts First and Second should be reserved to students in Philosophy, as they will find in them matters analogous to the subjects which they are studying for their Collegiate degrees. The remaining Parts may be distributed among the other classes, according to the judgment of the College Officials.

As nearly every thesis is supplied with abundant matter for its demonstration, it will be the Teacher's task to determine and specify what is required for recitation in his class, and what may be assigned as supplementary reading matter for private study.

Following the suggestion of competent authorities, I have made each of the two volumes a work complete in itself, as far as subject-matters treated are concerned: each volume having its own table of contents at the beginning and its own alphabetical index of subjects at the end.

The Alphabetical Index of all the writers quoted throughout this Course will be given at the end of Volume II.

With regard to the References quoted in this work from non-Catholic authors, it is understood that, in citing them, we intend to endorse their thoughts and arguments only so far as they are found to agree with the doctrine stated in our text. Such works have been consulted to ascertain the opinions of our opponents with a view to furnish to our readers the refutation of teachings opposed to the doctrine expounded and defended in this Apologetic Course.

It is sincerely hoped that this new and copiously augmented edition of Christian Apologetics will be of help both to the general reader and to our Catholic Youth—to whom it is dedicated—in acquiring a reliable and thorough information of the fundamental principles of their holy Religion, to the end that their defense of it may be both intelligent, courageous and successful.

Joseph C. Sasia, S.J.

University of Santa Clara,
Santa Clara, California.
September 5, 1924.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

When we undertake to establish the reality of the supernatural Revelation, and the divine institution of the Roman Catholic Church, we have a right to presuppose in our demonstration several other truths or principles pertaining to the scientific or philosophical order. Nevertheless, competent judges have advised us that in our days it is supremely important to present to Catholic youths a summary or abridgment of the most fundamental preliminaries, such as the proofs of the existence and attributes of God, and of the spirituality and immortality of the human soul, theologically called *Præambula Fidei* (paving the way to Faith).

The existence of God, first of all; for Atheism, cried down and refuted long ago as a mental monstrosity, is again rampant, and proudly boasts of being the latest conquest of modern science. Science, after having solemnly protested that it based its conclusions *solely* upon *experience,* and that *experiment* has nothing to do with the questions of the *origin* and essence or nature of things (Littré); that it did not concern itself either about the *first causes* of beings, or about *their end* or purpose (Berthelot); yet, strange to say, this same science claims to have disproved, it would seem, the very existence of the First Cause! The progress of chemistry, physics, astronomy appears to have demonstrated the uselessness of a Creator!

Samuel Wainwright, in his excellent book entitled "Scientific Sophisms," reproduces the verdict of modern infidel sciences in the following words (ch. 1, pp. 1–2):

"God created man? No such thing. The *monads* developed him. The heavens declare the glory of God? Far from it, they declare only the glory of the *astronomer.* We have now no need of the hypothesis of God. The divine existence

is now declared to be not only unnecessary; it is absolutely unreal; it is the creature of the human imagination." The hand may well tremble that writes it, and the ears may tingle that hear it, yet it has been both written and said.

Beside this shocking denial, and what is more perfidious still, doubt, we find that in this century of ours even the most evident truths have been obscured, and the most solid convictions, in a great measure, shaken up or even entirely uprooted. After hearing men of incontestable ability often proclaiming that reason is unable to demonstrate the foundations of Faith; after hearing it repeatedly stated that it is impossible to prove the existence of God, the divinity of Christ or the immortality of man's soul, it is but natural to expect that our youth will ask with some kind of uneasiness, if it be really true that he believes in God without any rational or reasonable motive. And if his faith should still remain unshaken, will he not see himself reduced to the position of opposing to these sophisms a conviction, sincere, no doubt, but one of which he only too vaguely possesses the basis? We do not hesitate to say: That the young Christian owes it to himself, he owes it to his weaker brethren, to be able to demonstrate in a triumphant manner this truth of primary importance, *that reason honestly consulted never fails to lead to the belief and acceptance of revealed Faith.* As we shall show further on (nn. 141, 142 of Part III), when treating of the function of reason in matters of faith, faith presupposes a *rational knowledge* of God; to believe it is necessary to know beforehand that God exists. But it may be said, what use is there of entering into the difficult path of a scientific demonstration? Does not God manifest Himself clearly enough by the voice of conscience, by the marvels of His works? Most certainly, there is nothing easier than the reasoning which shows to the upright and sincere soul the existence of God. But the imperfect knowledge which suffices for the masses is one thing and the profound knowledge reserved for the high intellects is quite another.

Happy are they who have the will and the leisure to cultivate and to attain it! The pleasure of the mind consists in the

contemplation of the truth; and this pleasure is all the greater in proportion as the truth thus contemplated is more sublime or more important and shines with greater brilliancy. Now, the aim of the study, which we are about to undertake, is precisely to show forth the greatest of all truths: the existence of God, the first Cause and the first purpose or end of all things. Next to the existence of God comes the discussion on the human soul, its Liberty, Spirituality and Immortality. The wide spreading in our days of the doctrines of *Determinism* and *Materialism* cannot be denied, and it is well known with what audacity those abominable systems also shelter themselves under the mantle and prestige of modern science.

But it would be of little value to prove the existence of a Supreme Being, if it all ended in mere Theism. The true idea or conception of God is constantly attacked, changed, perverted by a multitude of writers, who vie with each other in proclaiming their so-called religious impressions, who acclaim God in prose and verse. A kind of religious sentimentalism, vague and false, poisons a certain class of spiritualistic literature. Has there not been found many a pantheistic formula in the works of our most celebrated poets? In all probability the writer (A. Nettement) was not exaggerating who called "*pantheism* the seducer of the highest intellects of our times." Deistic philosophy, a press indifferent to religion, the diffusion of atheistic scientific theories, everything conspires to falsify the true notion and idea of God. This is why there exists an urgent necessity to put this idea in its true light.

We need not here dwell on the paramount importance of the questions we are about to treat, for it is self-evident. Indeed, of all the truths that may interest the curiosity of man and attract his undivided attention, the most weighty, the most fundamental is, no doubt, the existence of God. Upon it rests the whole edifice of religion, which is the study of man's relations to his Creator. The great enigma of man's destiny here and hereafter can be deciphered only by the light of that master truth; and blind is that science that does not recognize in nature the vestiges of its Author. "*All men are*

vain, in whom there is not the knowledge of God.'' (Wisdom, 13, 1.)

It is in vain that a certain school of philosophy strives to make progress consist in a haughty contempt of what they are pleased to style a *chimera.* But such an attitude of supreme indifference will not prevent thinking men from addressing to themselves the awful inquiry: ''Whence do I come? Whither am I going? Have I a Master over me? Have I a judge, to whom I am accountable?''

And what about our soul, its nature, its origin, its destiny? Man's life changes character and significance according as it is considered simply as a chance succession of mechanical phenomena, ending in nothingness, or as a place of temporary probation, where man by the exercise of good works secures to himself the possession of a happiness that shall never end.

Man is truly the masterpiece of creation. In classic language, man's body is a veritable *microcosm*—a little world—a world in miniature. His soul, ''that vital spark of heavenly flame,'' is in itself as enduring as the omnipotent power that brought it into existence. His mental faculties, intellect, memory and will are an image of the august Trinity; a mirror, a reflection of the uncreated beauty, wisdom and perfection of the Godhead. In the language of St. Gregory the Great, man contains in himself an abridgment, a summary of all the wonders scattered throughout the realm of creation by God's munificent hand. In fact, he shares existence with the minerals, growth with plants, sensibility with animals, intelligence with the angels, and immortality with God. Hence the greatest of English poets could truly exclaim:

> ''What a piece of work is a man!
> How noble in reason, how infinite in faculties!
> In action how like an angel!
> In apprehension how like a god!
> The beauty of the world, the paragon of animals!''
> —*Hamlet, Act II, sc. 2.*

This being so noble, so lofty, so wonderful, as the experience of sixty centuries teaches us, and our own testimony

assures us, this being, I say, soon disappears from the theatre of this world to return no more. Is there a destiny awaiting him beyond the grave?

Or must he utterly perish like the trees of the forest, the birds of the air and the beasts of the field? Was his existence, so ennobled by the lavish profusion of divine gifts, was it to be limited to the narrow horizon of the present life, or is it to be extended to the shoreless ocean of the eternal years? Though limited in his nature and finite in his faculties, man possesses nevertheless an intellect, whose capacity no earthly knowledge can fill; he possesses a heart, whose aspirations no temporal good can completely gratify. What then shall be the perfect object of his knowledge? What shall be the centre of his love? To answer these questions is to solve the problem of life.

If it be the most sacred and peremptory duty of man to propose to himself the question regarding his destiny in the future world, it is likewise a matter of the greatest moment for him to know, with unerring certainty, its true answer. And it was precisely to preserve the human mind from all danger of error and deception in a point that affects our most vital interests both of time and eternity, and determines the direction of all the actions of our responsible life, it was for this object, I say, that God Himself, with a providential care, worthy of His infinite goodness and wisdom, has revealed to His intelligent creatures upon earth the true answer to that gravest of questions. As man's present destiny is entirely supernatural, viz., above and beyond the exigencies of nature, and depending on God's Free Will, it cannot be known except from God Himself, and from Him also come the supernatural means enabling us to attain it. For the means, as reason itself teaches us, must be proportionate to the end. Hence divine revelation alone can solve the problem of life, and explain the true meaning of our earthly existence; not a revelation, mind well, read by every man's whim, and tampered by every man's judgment, but a revelation interpreted and expounded by the unerring voice of the Church of Christ, the divinely appointed teacher of men, guaranteed against all error and corruption

by the infallible assurance of Him who said more than nineteen centuries ago: "*I will ask the Father and He shall give you another Paraclete, the* Spirit of truth, *that He may abide with you forever . . . When He, the* Spirit of truth, *is come, He will teach you all truth.*" (John 14, 16, 17; 16, 13.)

And, thanks to this most merciful provision, the teachers and guides, that are to lead us to the knowledge of divine truth, are not far to seek. We find them in our very midst, in the persons of the ministers of Christ, the God-sent ambassadors and successors of the Apostles, in whose possession is found the treasure of revealed Faith; the full and complete body of Christian truths, teaching man his origin, his end and the means by which to attain it. In listening to their voice we bow and submit to the voice of God Himself, speaking to men through the instrumentality of His Church; of that Church, I mean, who alone can produce before the world the credentials and testimonials of her divine mission, authorizing her to teach in the name of God as the very mouthpiece of eternal *truth;* that Church, who alone can trace back through an unbroken tradition of nineteen hundred years, in an uninterrupted line of successors, the divine commission to announce to all human generations the heavenly message of salvation brought upon earth by her Founder, the Incarnate Son of God, the Savior and Redeemer of the world; that Church in fine, who identical in every respect with that of the Apostles has never ceased to appear before men invested with the exclusive character of divine truth, sealed with the evidence of divine miracles, and stamped with the approval and testimony of God (nn. 205–214).

This Church has certainly the authority and power to speak on the *problem of life,* and if she speaks, she has undoubtedly the right to be heard. Basing then her teaching on the revealed *word* of God, embodied both in holy Scripture and Tradition, she tells us in a language which no man can mistake or misapprehend, that in accordance with the designs of Divine Providence this world, in which we dwell for a brief period of years, is but a preparation for the next, which shall last forever. Hence the present is for the future, time is for

eternity, death is the beginning of a new life, and the gloom of the grave shall one day give place to the brightness of ever enduring light. It is then from the voice, from the infallible authority of the Catholic Church that we learn the noble, lofty truth of our origin and of the high destiny that awaits us beyond the grave; a destiny so great, so precious, so sublime, that God, omnipotent as He is, could not create man for a higher object, could not make him for a nobler purpose.

Enlightened by these principles we can confidently approach the great *problem of life* and solve it in a manner completely satisfactory both to the claims of the mind, and to the aspirations of the heart. Hence each one of us can truly say to himself: God is my first beginning and my last end. A God man is my Redeemer, my Savior, my Teacher, my Model; virtue is my profession; justice is my rule of life; grace is my strength; heaven is my inheritance, eternity my expectation, my happiness, the happiness of God Himself. Therefore, in accordance with these principles, I was made not to amass earthly riches, which are perishable, not to covet earthly honors, which are fleeting, not to indulge my unruly appetites, which are degrading, in a word, I was not made to commit sin, I was not made to live in rebellion against my Creator, but I was made to serve God as His subject, to obey Him as His servant, to love Him as His child, and to possess Him as my reward. It is from the sublimity of these sentiments that man learns to appreciate his dignity and disdains to dishonor himself and his sacred character by the horrors of vice. It is by realizing these sublime truths that he fears to degrade himself by the slavery of his passions, to tarnish the beauty of his immortal soul and blight his prospects of eternal happiness by the stain of grievous sin, the consciousness of which makes the stoutest heart quiver and tremble at the portals of eternity, when man is about to appear before that Supreme Judge, from whose piercing glance nothing can escape, and from whose sentence there lies no appeal. Dear reader, let us frequently recall to our memory these lofty, elevating, sublime thoughts. They ennoble all our sentiments, they sanctify all our actions, they satisfy all our desires, they

comfort us in all our afflictions, they sustain us in all our adversities. In this point of view our soul becomes more precious than all the goods of this world; our dignity as Christians surpasses in grandeur and magnificence that of all earthly kings and potentates; and the title of immortal, reminding us of our everlasting, happy destiny, reflects on us more honor than all the diadems that have ever encircled the brow of the mightiest monarchs of the earth. It has been well said, "On earth there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but the soul; in the soul there is nothing great but the grace and friendship of God, which entitle him to the possession of that bliss which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor man's heart conceived." It is the purpose of this work to exhibit and demonstrate the solid foundations, on which the sublime truths here enunciated are grounded, and thus enable the Christian reader to carry into execution the advice of the Prince of the Apostles, "*being ready always to satisfy every one that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you.*" (I Peter, 3, 15.) May our divine Lord, for whose honor and glory these pages are written, grant that neither the logical vigor of our reasoning, nor the clearness of our exposition, shall suffer from the condensation and abridgment of our book.

THE EDITOR.

N.B.—References in parentheses are to the marginal numbers of this volume, unless otherwise indicated.

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CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

PART I

GOD, HIS EXISTENCE, HIS NATURE OR ESSENCE

CHAPTER I

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

§ I. Preliminary Ideas and Division

1. Idea or Notion of God. We deem the following remarks by Bishop John S. Vaughan in his book "Faith and Folly" a fit introduction to our discussion:

"To seek for proofs of God's existence may seem to many of my readers a task as that of groping about in a broiling hot day of summer in search of the Sun, which is all the while shining out above our heads in dazzling splendor and magnificence and being reflected in a thousand varying tints from countless objects on earth, sea and sky. Yet a mere glance at the current literature of the day is enough to dissipate such a fond delusion, and to show that a large number of minds are far from regarding this great central dogma of Catholic truth as at all settled. To many it is still a question to be proved and discussed; and many minds have become disturbed and agitated in attempting to grapple with the objections against it that are being daily echoed and reechoed on every side." The chief difficulties here referred to will be duly sifted and thoroughly refuted in the following pages: and it will be shown, at the same time, that in all ages and

regions the highest culture of the overwhelming majority of mankind has paid its willing, conscious homage to the sovereign Creator and supreme Ruler of the Universe.

Though, strictly speaking, at the threshold of our demonstration, we are not allowed to assume or take for granted the existence of God, the very point that we are about to prove, yet we feel it to be our duty to determine with precision the nature of the being designated under the name God. But who ignores this truth? Is it not an incontestable fact that humanity is in possession of the knowledge of a Superior Being, the Supreme Cause of the Universe and the Sovereign Master of man?

2. Not only is this concept of God found to exist in all human souls, but His existence is moreover proclaimed everywhere. We must, in the first place, examine the fact of this universal affirmation, and we shall be able to show that that fact alone constitutes by itself one of the proofs of the existence of God. But this conclusion being admitted, can we avoid asking whence comes to humanity the universal conviction, in other words, on what foundation is this affirmation grounded? We answer with St. Paul (Rom. 1, 19-20) and the author of Wisdom (13, 1 sqq.) that the existence of God is logically deduced from the existence of the visible world. To confirm the demonstration we shall enumerate the principal absurdities of atheism: hence, three parts in our treatise.

I. The affirmation of mankind; first proof of the existence of God.
II. The visible world; second proof.
III. The absurdities of atheism; third proof.

§ II. Proofs of the Existence of God

I. THE AFFIRMATION OF MANKIND

3. The existence of God is affirmed in two ways:

The first, *explicit* and formal, is put forth in profession of faith and religious practices; the second is called *implicit*, because, without being expressly formulated, it is, as it were,

contained in the affirmation of another reality, that of the moral law. Let us separately study these two affirmations, commencing with implicit affirmation.

A. Implicit Affirmation of the Existence of God

To avoid all misunderstanding, let us remark that according to different points of view it is logically permissible to descend from the existence of God to that of the moral law, or to ascend from the moral law to the existence of God. If in any way man has attained to the knowledge of God, it would not be difficult to conclude that God, the sovereign and wise Master, must have established a moral law. In that case the moral law would be the logical consequence of the existence of God presupposed to be known. On the contrary, man in ignorance of the existence of God, perceives the existence of a moral law. We seek for a rational explanation of this fact, and we discover that it is possible only on condition that God exists. It is on this second argumentation that we intend to proceed.

4. Three points are to be demonstrated: (1) Mankind affirms the existence of a moral law. (2) This affirmation is true; in other words, the moral law is a reality. (3) Now this moral law would be an absurdity if there were no God. Therefore God exists.

5. **1. Affirmation of the Moral Law.** Let us remember at the very outset that one thing is to deny all moral law; another thing to be mistaken on the morality of this or that particular act; and, lastly, quite another thing to violate the moral law. We are assuredly far from claiming that men *follow* universally and scrupulously the guidance of their conscience; we acknowledge that gross errors have too often defiled the ideas of pure morality. Paganism did not recoil from deifying the vices themselves.

In spite of their errors, their weakness and their crimes, men proclaim the existence of morality. Honesty, justice, right and duty, moral good and moral evil, virtue and vice, are ideas acknowledged and affirmed to be true both by the

individual conscience and by universal practice. No sensible man ever believed that to honor one's mother or to murder her, to observe or transgress the Ten Commandments, to tell the truth or to perjure oneself, are actions equally good and equally moral. Undoubtedly there are *theorists* who have denied the difference between good and evil, between right and wrong. What folly is there that did not have its partisans? What blunder is there, said Cicero, that has not been taught by some philosopher? Have there not been men who claimed to have doubts of their own existence? But the most obstinate skeptic, put to the proof of certain personal arguments of a *striking* nature, is immediately convinced of the reality of his personal existence. It is thus with the theorists in question. Their conduct pitilessly, but fortunately, contradicts their words. Man may deny morality, but when he is seriously wronged in his honor, his possessions, a voice more powerful than all theories rises in his heart and cries out with irresistible authority: "The scoundrel who has defrauded me, the thief who has robbed me, has violated his duty to his fellow man." For the idealist, most skeptical about his *duties,* thinks quite differently when it is a question of his own personal *rights.* All men talk of their rights, of right of property, individual or collective, right to their reputation, to respect on the part of their fellow men, etc., etc. And they all speak on all occasions with an energy, vehemence and earnestness which bear witness to the fact of their profound conviction.

Now, what right would that be which everyone might violate, I do not say *legally* but *lawfully?* It would simply be nonsense, an absurdity. If I have a right to own a piece of land, it is on condition that others be bound to respect my property. Right in one person always presupposes a corresponding *obligation* in another, for right and duty are correlative terms; hence one cannot exist independently of the other.

Therefore, whether we hearken to the voice of mankind or to the interior promptings of conscience, everywhere we hear affirmed a real obligation, a true moral law. Is this

affirmation wrong? Is the moral law an idle fancy, a mere chimera? We shall show at once that it is not.

6. **2. The Moral Law Is a Reality.** Anyone who refuses to accept the testimony of mankind must submit to the following consequences: (1) That human reason is invincibly, necessarily mistaken as to the most fundamental, the most essential questions of life. They alone would then be in the right who reject all law, every obligation; that is to say, the men whom all mankind repels as monsters! And again, these monsters would be convicted of contradicting in a thousand ways their own theoretic negation. (2) That society, which is a necessity for the human race, would have no other basis than an abominable lie. That morality is the foundation of society is a most evident truth. Can we imagine a society of men without honesty, without honor; a society where perjury would be held to be the same thing as veracity; a society impelled to action only by the attraction of pleasure, without other curb than brutal force or mere utilitarian views? (3) Moreover, the erroneous system held by our opponents would immediately turn against its authors. For if human reason is such that it errs invincibly, inevitably as to the most fundamental questions, how can there be an appeal to human reason against the moral law? For if human reason is essentially unreliable in one case, it must inevitably be untrustworthy in all others. Hence the choice, indeed inevitable, between the two alternatives; either the frightful chaotic condition of a society destitute of moral principles and of moral restraint is the normal condition of mankind—or society, to exist must lean on a conviction both contradictory and absurd. They are indeed to be pitied whom such logical deductions fail to enlighten. We are then justified in admitting, as a legitimate conclusion, the reality of the moral law.

7. **3. There Can Be No Moral Law without God.** (*a*) Most assuredly it is not man that imposes upon himself the moral law. For if he were its author, he would be free to modify its prescriptions according to his changeable whims and caprices; but this cannot be, because, as it is proved in ethics, the moral law is, in its first principles, absolute, neces-

sary and immutable. (See "Natural Law and Legal Practice," by René T. Holaind, S.J., p. 48.)

(*b*) Neither can political authority or civil society impose the moral law. For besides presupposing the existence and binding force of moral law, without which, as it has been shown (n. 6), it cannot exist, that authority may, and does at times, enact prescriptions contrary to the dictates of conscience, the secret voice revealing to man the injunctions of that law. At all events, the will, or ordinances of civil society, are neither absolute, nor necessary, nor unchangeable. Therefore, the only conceivable lawgiver must be that Superior Being whose will is indefectible, that is God.

(*c*) We shall reach the same conclusion by the following reflection: If we seek the ultimate reason or cause of the unlawfulness of certain human acts, such as blasphemy, perjury, hatred of one's neighbor, we must go to the divine intellect, which has, from all eternity, conceived the existing moral order as perfectly conformable to the immutable divine essence. This is the last and the only true reason or cause of all immutable moral laws and consequent obligations. Hence God Himself cannot change blasphemy, perjury, etc., into honest acts, for this would be something absolutely repugnant to His very essence, and contrary to the necessary relations existing between Himself and His intelligent creatures. Hence God cannot render a human act honest when it is intrinsically wrong; for what is intrinsically proper of any being, constitutes the very essence of that being. Now, metaphysics teaches us that the essences of beings are immutable, in as much as they are conformable to the divine ideas, which are as immutable as the divine essence itself containing those ideas or concepts. But God can transform into moral obligations the several relations that result from the intrinsic nature of things. Such are, for instance, the relations and corresponding rights and duties between a Sovereign and his subjects, the parents and their offspring, the creditors and their debtors; between benefactors and the objects of their benevolence. In conclusion, the moral order is conceived by the divine mind, decreed by the divine will, commanding its ob-

servance and forbidding its violation, it is mirrored in created intellects, and made binding on created wills. Hence, as it is absolutely impossible to assign a satisfactory reason of the binding force of the moral law independently of the existence of God, we must logically conclude that God exists. (*d*) Every law must have a special *sanction* capable of enforcing its execution, though not tampering in the least with the exercise of human freedom. Now God alone can impose a sanction sufficiently efficacious to secure its observance.

In fact, (*a*) it is evident that neither individuals nor society can sanction a law, since they have not even the power to enact it independently of God, the Supreme Lawgiver, as it will appear in the sequel. (*b*) Experience shows that this sanction is not in the hands of individuals. Who can reward himself at will for his good actions? And what as to society? It can, indeed, *in certain cases,* induce or compel us to observe the moral law; it has at its disposal some rewards; it possesses armed force, the police, the prisons, the gallows or the guillotine; but, (*c*) does it not happen that sometimes it rewards crimes and proscribes virtue? (*d*) How many errors does it not commit in its decisions? (*e*) How many crimes go often unpunished? How many virtues are ignored? (*f*) Besides this sanction is absolutely defective as to all interior acts; as to the grandest virtues, such as the hidden sacrifice of one's life, the interior pardon of injuries, etc. (*g*) There is no sanction in the present life; pleasure, utility, impose no efficacious obligation upon us; for between two finite advantages, the will remains perfectly free and indifferent. *It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that there should be a sanction in another life.* It may be said that the eternal sanction itself does not do away with the allurements of pleasure. Very true, it does not, of course, suppress liberty. But to risk the forfeiture of eternal happiness for the sake of an unlawful pleasure of a moment is extreme folly. Would there be the same check on the abuse of our liberty if we only had to fear the more or less probable sanction of the present life? Take the case of a man who has to choose between the loss of fortune or of life, and a crime certain to be secret. Can you

convince him of the obligation of observing the moral law otherwise than by the thought of the existence of God, who will punish crime? (*h*) But who will be able to apply this sanction? No one except *the only Legislator possible: a being superior to man—his Judge and Master.* To sum up: Of what use is to me a law that comes, I know not from whom, I know not whence? What influence upon my conduct can that law which I may break with impunity have, unless there is a Judge to demand an account of my actions, a master to punish me if I sin, and a Father to reward me if I do what is right? Brunetière, once a freethinker, but later a fervent Catholic, found himself compelled to make this avowal: "Let us learn to see things as they are. Morality, true morality, finds its support and sanction only in the belief in God. *Morality is nothing if it is not religious.*" Schopenhauer had long before acknowledged that "the idea of duty belongs only to *theological morality.*" Unless, therefore, we admit a law without a lawgiver, an obligation without any sanction, we are right in laying down this dilemma: one must either deny the moral law or admit the existence of God. But to deny morality is an impossibility and an absurdity. Therefore, God exists. This is the legitimate conclusion following from the implicit affirmation of mankind. We shall now see with what authority it affirms explicitly the existence of God.

B. Explicit Affirmation of the Existence of God

8. Two points are to be proven: (1) Mankind, and especially the best among men, *explicitly affirms* the existence of God. (2) The *characteristics* which this affirmation bears and the *fruits* it produces show mostly plainly that it cannot be false.

9. **1. Affirmation of Mankind.** We must make a distinction between the popular affirmation and the affirmation of the cultured class of men.

(*a*) *Popular Affirmation.* The fact that belief in the Divinity is universal, is truly one of the best-established facts in history. Undoubtedly the true idea of God has been too

often altered and intermingled with gross elements; undoubtedly men are far from acting under all circumstances as their belief would require. But—and this suffices for our thesis—at least in all the more serious circumstances of life, in those moments when, the passions being subdued, the voice of conscience rises clear and distinct, mankind proclaims the existence of a Supreme Being, its Master and Judge.

10. (*b*) *Barbarous Nations.* Here we could easily quote all ancient authors: Homer, Virgil, Herodotus, Sophocles, etc., etc. "What human family is there," asks Cicero, "that does not have, before all other knowledge, an anticipated knowledge of the Divinity? No nation is so gross, so savage as not to believe in the existence of the gods, even when it is mistaken as to their nature." (De natura deorum, IV.) "In traveling over the earth," says Plutarch, "you may find cities without ramparts, etc. . . . but a people *without God,* without prayers, without religious oaths, without religious rites, without sacrifices, is nowhere seen." (Adv. Col. Epic.) "The Greek and the *barbarian,*" says Maximus of Tyre, "the man from the mainland and the inhabitant of the islands, unanimously confess the existence of a God. If from the beginning of the world there have been found two or three wretches who deny God, we do not hesitate to say they are of a degraded, unreasonable, fruitless race, struck with death." (Dissert. I.) "All men who are in any way rational," says Plato, "invoke the Divinity at the beginning of their actions, be these actions great or small." (Tim.) Hardly any discordant voices are heard, and even they render testimony to the universality of the belief in God. Will it be objected that these ancient authors only knew of a very small part of the human race? But in our day, the earth has been explored in its most inaccessible regions, and it can be said of all savage people, best known in our day, what Livingstone said of the tribes of the Dark Continent: "Degraded as they may be, it is not necessary to speak to them of the existence of God, nor of the future life. Those two truths are universally acknowledged in Africa." Even in the depths of prehistoric caverns, thanks to the discovery of vestiges of primitive worship, ex-

plorers have found the same affirmation of human reason: *God exists.* This testimony of the *barbarians* is of the greatest value, for it reveals the spontaneous instinct of human nature.

11. Objection. At the end of the last century a traveler pretended to have encountered peoples so degraded and so brutish in their habits as to be entirely destitute of any knowledge of the Divinity. It was question of the so-called Mincopies on the island of Andaman, where the English Government had established a penal colony. On hearing this there was great rejoicing in the atheistic camp. For it was found, at last, they said, that the belief in God's existence is by no means universal.

Answer. It would be difficult for atheists to acknowledge more plainly the demonstrative force of the consent of mankind on the truth of the existence of the Deity. They are so afraid of it that they welcome with delirious delight the testimony of any traveler in their favor, no matter how ignorant he may be of the language, habits and sentiments of the savage tribe he happens to meet. Their joy, however, was of short duration; for it was soon found, upon closer examination, that the supposed atheistic tribe possessed more religious sentiments than some of the so-called civilized peoples. (See Ausland, p. 471, on the Andaman islanders, supposed formerly to have no religion.)

The following quotations from distinguished writers on the subject at issue will give additional weight to our answer. In his "Philosophy of Mythology," Schelling singles out Azara's testimony as exceptionally worthy of credit. "The Savants of the last century traveled in quest of a race of atheists, which has not yet been discovered." The saying of Artemidorus, the learned author of the "Treatise on Dreams" (I, 9), still holds good: "There exists no nation without God; some honor Him in one way, some in another." Waitz in his *Anthropologie der Naturvölker* writes: "It is true that belief in God in the sense of civilized nations is not found among all peoples. But if we understand by religious belief the conviction of the existence of mysterious powers, on whose favor

man's destiny depends, we may then safely conclude that every nation has some kind of religion."

Tylor, in his "Primitive Culture" (I, p. 378), asserts that "the statement that there are races without religion is based on modern sources more or less untrustworthy, and on testimonies often unsupported and never conclusive."

Lastly, Max Müller, this highest authority on this question, in one of his lectures on the Science of Religion (1873, p. 53), speaks as follows: "The real point to settle before we adopt one or the other views (the religion or irreligion of savages) is what kind of authority can be deduced from those, whose opinions we quote. Did they really know the language, and know it sufficiently to enter into a friendly conversation on topics bearing on religious belief? Not many years ago it was supposed, on what was then deemed good authority, that the Zulus had no religious ideas at all; at present our very Bishops (Protestant) have been silenced by their theological inquiries. We are, then, amply justified in saying that as yet we have no reliable evidence of any single nation utterly devoid of religious sentiment." (See Hettinger, "Natural Religion," p. 74.)

When therefore the atheist says, "Give me proof of your God," we simply reply: "Man, from the beginning of human existence upon earth, has known God, and faith in God is his normal possession. Can you disprove this natural right of his, and show that his Faith has been one long delusion? The owner of an immemorial inheritance has not to prove his title, or show the authenticity of his deed; it is for his opponent to disprove it. This atheism has not as yet been able to do. Nay, by its gratuitous denial, it contradicts the most direct impressions and the universal voice of the human race."

This testimony furnished by barbarians deserves, no doubt, to be recorded as an evidence of great value, for it reveals the spontaneous promptings of human nature; yet it must be admitted that the judgment of civilized nations is of much greater value. Besides, what a contradiction on the part of unbelievers! Whilst, on one hand, they claim to extol and impose atheism as the last word of scientific progress, on

the other hand, they are ready to assert that the testimony of civilized nations is weakened by that of a few savages sunk in the lowest depths of barbarism.

12. (*c*) *Civilized Nations.* Is there any possibility of doubt as to them? On the ruins of extinct civilizations, in the mysterious inscriptions of Egypt and Babylonia, on each page of history, shines forth the name of God. Greece had dedicated altars to all the divinities, *even to the unknown* God. Diagoras, the atheistic disciple of Democritus, was teaching his doctrines to the people of Athens; but they soon became disgusted with his teaching, so that a price was set on his head. Diagoras sought safety in flight. Rome gathered in her Pantheon all the gods of the conquered world. All the private and public life of the people-king was based upon religion. Later, when the Christian religion threatened the destruction of paganism, it was enough to accuse its adherents of atheism in order to arouse against them all the popular passions. Hardly had the barbarian hordes, issuing from the forests of Germany, divided among themselves the scattered fragments of the Roman Empire, when the Church conquered these fierce warriors and brought them to kneel at the foot of the Cross. Then commenced that period of profound and universal Faith which is called the Middle Ages. The modern era saw arise new systems of philosophy, whose partisans, whilst they insult Christianity, do not dare to deny the existence of God. The French Revolution proscribes priests, overthrows Catholic altars, but hastens to proclaim, by the mouth of Robespierre, transformed into the grand Pontiff, that "the nation believes in the Supreme Being," and Bonaparte soon rose to lift up from its ruins the religion of the immense majority of Frenchmen. To-day, even in countries most ravaged by unbelief, atheists form but a small minority. "Would you venture to suppose the existence of one atheist among *a hundred* fathers of families?" said the rationalist Jules Simon (L'École, The School, 1885) to the partisans of the *neutral, that is Godless, school.* And the same author thought he was going too far in admitting in each *department* of France one or two partisans of the Godless schools. It

would be easy to show the same fact in all civilized countries: England, Germany, Italy, Spain, Belgium, etc. If we take the testimony of authors least open to suspicion, we shall everywhere hear them speak of the religion or religions of mankind, for instance, the anarchist free-thinker, Elisée Reclus, in his "Universal Geography." In presence of this incomparable unanimity, no one will hesitate to conclude with the great anthropologist, M. de Quatrefages: "This is the great fact. *Atheism is nowhere but at the erratic stage.* Always and everywhere the mass of the population has escaped its grasp; nowhere has even one of the great human races or any important division of it been atheistic." (*L'Espèce humaine,* The Human Species, xxxv, and *Les Pygmées,* The Pygmies.) Let us add one more testimony. "This vast field of exploration, the general or comparative study of religions begins only now to be fully open, thanks to the linguistic discoveries that enable us to decipher the writings of the ancient civilized peoples. . . . We can now read the documents bearing on their religious beliefs, and by consulting their oldest records, establish the fact that even in the remotest epochs of those nations we find religion already in existence and we never see its first beginnings." (Dr. Kraus, introduction to his "History of the Church.") Indeed, this is in very truth the great fact. Where can there be found another example of such agreement in any matter of importance? Is it not because human nature, overcome by evidence, renders to truth this splendid homage?

13. Objection. But atheists claim that there exists one more serious difficulty. Taken as a whole, this testimony of mankind, they say, is not an affirmation of the Divinity. What about idolatry? Is it not known that during long centuries, among almost all the peoples of the earth, "*everything was God but God Himself*"? Now, is it not about the same thing to take a piece of wood for God as to deny the existence of God?

Answer. (1) Cicero (De natura deorum, II) had already solved this difficulty: Men do not agree as to *the nature* of the gods; their existence nobody denies. *Quales sint, varium*

est; esse, nemo negat. As to what they are, opinion varies; that they exist, no one denies. To be in error as to the nature of a being is not to deny its existence. Does the ignorant man deny the existence of electricity, because he has the most erroneous and fantastic notions of it? At that rate, learned physicists, who are far from being agreed as to the nature of this mysterious agent, would be in doubt as to its existence. (2) Indeed, it must be that the existence of a supreme Being is very evident; man must be profoundly conscious of his dependence for him to feel the need of prostrating himself before a block of wood carved by himself. This answer may be easily applied to the difficulties taken from Polytheism and Pantheism. As to Polytheism, it is well to note that traces of Monotheism are easily recognized in it. (Cf. Monsabré, Carême, 1873, conference 3.)

14. (*d*) *Affirmation of the most Intellectual Classes of Men.* Forcible as this affirmation of nations is by its unanimity, it cannot, by any means, counterbalance nor replace that of cultivated intellects. The common people cannot usually give reasons for their convictions. Hence, without making light in any way of the common sense with which these people decide questions within their powers, we should hold in greater esteem convictions based upon profound investigations. The existence of God, an essential and fundamental truth above all, evidently comes within this category. Now it is a fact, to which the annals of history bear witness, that the foremost among men, distinguished by their intellectual abilities, men of genius, who are the pride of humanity, after having seriously studied the question of the existence of God, answer it unanimously in the affirmative. To substantiate this statement by the testimony of facts, we here allege a classified list of celebrated men, whose deep studies led them to the conscientious acknowledgment of that great, momentous truth, the existence of a Supreme Being. (For details, consult the standard Encyclopedias.)

I. Grecian Philosophers—Socrates, Xenophon, Aristotle, Plato, Plutarch.

II. Roman Philosophers—Cicero, Seneca, Quintillian.

To appreciate the following quotations at their full value two remarks must be borne in mind.

First, among the sages of antiquity Plato, Aristotle and Cicero signalized themselves by the strict logic, eloquence and solid argumentation, with which they demonstrated the existence and leading attributes of God as Supreme Ruler of the Universe. As shown in their works, fortunately preserved to this day, several of the proofs they employed have been adopted and developed by the Schoolmen and writers of our times, particularly by the prince of scholars, St. Thomas Aquinas, a fact confirming the permanent validity of the argument devised by those ancient authors.

Secondly, in the religious systems, if we may use the expression, of Greece and Rome, in spite of their many mythological aberrations and the consequent multiplication of deities, it is found that the idea of a supreme God was with them fundamental. They worshipped a multitude of gods because they instinctively sought the divine in the powers and wonders of nature. Yet they believed in the existence of a sovereign, primordial Being, the Zeus of the Greeks and the Jupiter of the Romans. But as historical ethnologists prove, among others the Germans Flügel, Knabenbauer and Cathrein, the primitive belief of nations was Monotheism, of which Polytheism became a later corruption, evidently a chastisement for their iniquities as described by St. Paul in his letter to the Romans (1, 19-31).

We find, however, among uncivilized pagan nations and savage tribes a remnant of Monotheism in as much as they worship one God superior to all the other divinities to which they pay some homage.

Plato (347 B.C.): "In the first place, the earth, sun and stars—all these and the beautiful arrangement of the seasons, divided into months, prove that there is a God. Besides, both Greeks and Barbarians believe that there are supreme beings." (Leg. X, 1.)

Xenophon (357 B.C.): "The Divinity is so great, and of such a character that He both sees and hears all things, is everywhere present, and attends to all things at once."

(Memorab., I, 4.) "It is believed that the gods have been worshipped by all men from the very beginning." (Memorab., IV, 4.)

Aristotle (322 B.C.): "In regard to the Deity, we must consider him as a spirit, the most powerful, immortal and perfection itself; wherefore, being invisible to mortal eyes, He is seen by His works." (De mundo 6.)

Plutarch (A.D. 120): "The worship most acceptable to God comes from a cheerful and thankful heart." (Fab. Max., 18.)

Cicero (43 B.C.): "No nation is so barbarous, no one is so savage, whose mind is not imbued with some idea of the gods. Many entertain foolish ideas respecting them, yet all think that there is some Divine power and nature." (Tuscul. Quæst., I, 13.) "In everything the consent of all nations is regarded as the laws of nature." (*ibid.*)

Seneca (A.D. 65): "We are wont to attribute much to what all men presume; with us it is an argument of truth that something seems true to all. There is no nation so void of laws or good manners, that it does not believe that there are some gods." (Epist. 117.)

Quintillian (A.D. 118): "Cultivate innocence and think not that your deeds, because they are concealed, will be unpunished. You have committed them under the canopy of heaven; there was there a more powerful witness." (Decl. 314.)

III. Christian Philosophers—St. Athanasius, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Basil, St. Justin, St. Augustine, Boetius, Origen, Tertullian, St. Jerome, St. Anselm, St. Bede, Alcuin, Peter Lombard, and towering above all, St. Thomas Aquinas, "one of the most illustrious geniuses that ever lived," as it was said recently by Brunetière.

To avoid unnecessary repetitions, for the testimony of scientific and literary men of modern times, the reader is referred to page 555, where, after our tenth proof of the divinity of Christianity, are recorded in alphabetical order, as a roll of honor, the names of leading historians, scientists and philosophers who professed their belief in Chris-

tianity and upheld its fundamental truths, such as the existence of God, the immortality of the human soul and the reality of future retribution. The reader will peruse with profit the excellent work of Mr. Ernest Naville, member of the Institute of France, who, in his "Modern Physics," proves, with numerous quotations, the very thesis we have endeavored to demonstrate, viz., that the great thinkers and scientific writers of our times have all been, with very few exceptions, firm believers in the existence of the Creator. And it was this very conviction of the existence of a first cause, the principle of the admirable order prevailing in the Universe, that brought them to study the marvelous unity, beauty and harmony of the physical laws, and led them to the astounding discoveries, which entitle them to the admiration and gratitude of posterity.

In this connection I deem it appropriate to acquaint the reader with the following occurrence related by Mr. Samuel Kinns in his work entitled "The Harmony of the Bible with Science, or Moses and Geology," p. 5, (Cassell & Co., New York): "At the meeting of the British Association, 1865, a manifesto was drawn up and signed by 617 scientific men, many of whom were of the highest eminence, in which they declare their belief, not only in the truth and authority of the Holy Scriptures, but also in their harmony with natural science." The original document is deposited in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Now, if to these 617 names of sincere Christian scientists, firm believers in God's existence, we add our long catalogues of distinguished personages, illustrious for their learning and religious sentiments we reach a cumulative authority on behalf of God's existence, which is both overwhelming and irresistible. But there is another glory of Catholicism in the field of natural science, that deserves a special notice, I mean Louis Pasteur, recently deceased at the advanced age of more than seventy. He is the most striking figure of the nineteenth century science. In biology, in chemistry, physics, medicine and surgery, and in the important practical subjects of fermentation and sanitation, he opened new avenues for successful explorations

into the hitherto unmapped domain of scientific knowledge. His work changed the whole aspect of biology and of the healing art, especially in the branches that refer to new and very successful methods in the treatment of disease. On the firm foundation of imperturbable Christian Faith this great genius reared an edifice of acquisitions to science, which shall perpetuate his memory to posterity for centuries untold. He exemplified in himself the principle of the perfect harmony existing between the teachings of revealed Faith and the results of scientific investigations. He rendered, moreover, signal services to the cause of religion, particularly when he completely demolished what had been hitherto held, by a certain class of scientists, as the chief support of the theory of evolution as opposed to the true explanation of the origin of life, human life included. I speak of the materialistic theory of spontaneous generation (nn. 168–169), to which he dealt the death blow when he proved experimentally that no germs are spontaneously produced, and that consequently all living substances derive their origin from other living beings and these ultimately from the Creator. *Omne vivum ex ovo.* Pasteur was a Christian of deep convictions, which he never hesitated to manifest before his colleagues. In the presence of the French Academy, on the day of his reception as a member of that august body, he recalled the words of another distinguished Christian scientist, Faraday. "The knowledge of God, and the conviction of the worship due to Him, come to my mind by ways as sure as those which lead us to the truths of the physical order." Still more clear and simple, says Father Van Tricht, his biographer, was the profession of his inner faith in private life. "Dear Master," said to him one of his disciples, "how can you still believe after having studied and reflected so much?" Pasteur answered: "It is precisely because I have studied and reflected much, that I have preserved the Faith *of a Christian man of Brittany.* And if I had studied and reflected still more, I should have the Faith *of a Christian woman of Brittany.*" (The Bretons are the staunchest Catholics in France.) That is but repeating in other words the famous sentiment of Lord Bacon,

who, in his essay on Atheism (xvi, p. 101), writes as follows: "It is true that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion. . . . None deny there is a God, but those for whom it maketh that there were no God." What are we then to conclude from these facts? This much, at least, that it would be supremely silly and ridiculous to accuse so many great and powerful minds of credulity and levity in a matter affecting the highest interests of men here and hereafter.

15. Objection. But, it will be said, learned men have denied the existence of God. Büchner, famous for his arrogant unbelief, says in his book, "Force and Matter," out of three scientists you may count two atheists.

Answer. Some learned men, I admit, have denied the force of certain proofs of the existence of God; but they have not, on that account, denied the existence itself of a Supreme Being. The few erratic minds, who dared call it in question, as a matter of fact, have as yet never tried to give us something like a proof of their denial. By an atheist is meant one who dogmatically denies the existence of a First Cause or Creator of all things, ruling the Universe and holding moral relations with mankind. Now we may safely say, without fear of contradiction from any quarter, that such gratuitous dogmatic denial is not in itself worth answering, since a demonstrative proof of the non-existence of God, assuredly, no one has ever found nor will find; for there cannot be an honest, full conviction of the truth of a theory diametrically opposed to the voice of reason, the promptings of human conscience and the unanimous consent of mankind. Neither have unbelievers ever succeeded in disproving the arguments on which the demonstration of God's existence is based. When Halley, according to his custom, would utter some bantering jokes disparaging to religion in Newton's presence, the latter used to stop him short by remarking: "I have studied those things and you have not." (Arago, Complete Works, vol. III, p. 335.) Hence atheists decide the question without examining it; often they make it a point purposely to avoid it; hence all discussion with such men is simply useless and a

mere waste of time, for, as the old saying has it, "a man convinced against his will, remains in the same opinion still." Moreover, it is impossible to admit any strength or value in their negative arguments, when we know the motive that has prompted them to hold an attitude of denial, or at least of cynic indifference. La Bruyère, in his famous work "Caractères" (xvi: Des esprits forts—On Freethinkers), says: "I would like to see a man who is sober, sedate, chaste, upright, honest, declare that there is no God; but such a man is not to be found." A witness who is not open to suspicion of partiality to the truth, Sainte-Beuve, has made the remark that the intellectual enemies of the Divinity of Jesus Christ are generally men little to be commended for humility and continence (Port-Royal, vol. I, ap. v). "This remark," says Fremont in citing the above sentence, "applies more particularly to atheists." (Scientific Demonstration of the existence of God.)

Such judgments may appear exaggerated if generalized, but they are certainly applicable, without any restrictions, to the representatives of fanatical and militant atheism. If they honestly believe that there is no God, why should they feel any necessity of proclaiming their unbelief with so much hatred and virulence? We must, moreover, add that a goodly number of these famous atheists have retracted their errors before dying. Thus Littré, when he received on his death-bed the eminent ecclesiastic, who was to baptize him, addressed to him these words: "Your reverence has come to see a great sinner," and Littré was received into the Catholic Church. (Fremont, *op. cit.*, p. 363.) The eminent political economist, Fred. Bastiat, also at his last moments exclaimed, as did the Polyeucte of Corneille, "I see, I know, I believe, I am a Christian." This fact is attested by Proudhon. (See Aug. Nicolas, "Philosophical Studies," vol. I, The Art of Believing.) Were it not for the humiliation implied in the act of retractation, many more would at that solemn, awful hour cease to resist the known truth.

It really seems that we might stop here and rightly conclude: God exists; I believe it on the testimony of mankind;

I believe it particularly on the testimony of the great men of genius, who, prostrate to the ground, humbly bowed before Him. However, we may tarry a little longer, and examine the characters and the fruits or results of belief in God, with a view to base our thesis on a still stronger foundation.

16. **Characters and Fruits of Our Affirmation.**

Characters. (*a*) Above all there is the character of *universality*. We have sufficiently insisted on this point. It constitutes at least a strong presumption in favor of any opinion that many hold it. As the eloquent Monsabré remarks, "Before supposing that all mankind is mistaken, one is rather inclined to believe the contrary, viz., that all mankind is right." We claim to find in this universal recognition of an intelligent Being, superior to the material world and to man, not only a corroboration of the other proofs to be examined further on, but an argument of absolute value in itself. We claim that a fact like this, of the consent of mankind of all times and in all places, must be deemed the voice of universal reason yielding to the compelling evidence of truth. As sound philosophy teaches, the cause must be adequate to the effect. A universal effect must imply an equally universal cause. But truth alone is such a cause. Error is always partial, local, temporary, manifold; truth alone is consistent, permanent and everywhere the same. Some few philosophers have attempted to dispute or at least to minimize the validity of this unanimous belief, but nevertheless the belief has proved to be persistent and indestructible in the mass of mankind.

(*b*) *Spontaneity.* "Have you not observed," says Fr. Olivier (Theolog. Conferences, vol. I, 7th Conference), "that among the names that a child learns and remembers best with those of his father and mother, the name of God stands foremost? Have you not remarked that not only he learns and remembers that name, but he understands it, for he attaches to it an importance, which he does not give to many others, that seemingly ought to interest him more." "I feel that there is a God," said La Bruyère, "and I do not feel that there is no God; this is enough for me; all the reasoning in

the world is useless in my eyes. I conclude that God exists; this conclusion *is in my nature;* I have received its principles too spontaneously during my childhood and I have preserved them too naturally in more advanced years to suspect them to be false." (Caractères, xv.)

Who has not read the eloquent words of Tertullian (Apologetics, ch. xvii): "Do you wish that we should prove the existence of God . . . by the testimony of your soul? In spite of the body that imprisons it, in spite of the prejudices of education that arrest its flight, in spite of the passions which enervate it, and of the idols that hold it captive . . . as soon as it emerges from its intoxication, from its lethargy, and returns to assert its dignity, it names God: Great God! Good God! God grant it! This is the cry of every man; Oh! testimony of the soul naturally Christian!"

It matters little what part has been played by education, by teaching in the origin or beginning of the idea of God, for the fact remains that, as soon as this idea is revealed to the soul, it imposes itself irresistibly, it responds to the most profound aspirations of human nature. Now, it is impossible, absurd, to suppose that our nature should spontaneously tend to falsehood and error.

St. Thomas says: "It is impossible that a thing that all men affirm *unanimously* should be false. For, an erroneous opinion comes from intellectual weakness or defect, but not from the nature of the mind itself. *The constant or persistent characteristic of such an erroneous opinion* is therefore to be *accidental;* but that which is accidental can never be *universal.* In questions of religion and morality, a judgment which all men agree to accept as true, cannot in any way be false." (Contra Gent. II, 34.)

17. Fruits. One may say of doctrines what Jesus Christ said of men: "*Ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos, by their fruits you shall know them.*" (Matt. 7, 20.)

"The virtue of man," says Renan, "is, after all, the great proof of God." (Phil. Dial., p. 30.) The numerous conversions caused by the spectacle of Christian charity, for instance, the life and labors of the Little Sisters of the Poor, show

that there is a great deal of truth in this assertion of this French apostate. The belief in God (we mean, of course, the belief in the true God) has always been for mankind a source of happiness, the only consolation in misfortune, the only support of virtue. On the other hand, the abominable principles of godless teaching display their disastrous consequences before the eyes of all. Witness the crimes of youths, suicides, moral corruption, which, according to unsuspected testimony, resemble the tide of unclean waters overflowing the land. It would be as easy to prove this as it is unnecessary. Let us ask our conscience, and if its testimony is not sufficient, let us hear that of a celebrated materialist (Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes,* 1892): "To-day, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, Christianity is for four hundred millions of human creatures the spiritual organ, the great pair of wings absolutely necessary to enable man to rise above himself. . . . *Always and everywhere, during eighteen hundred years, the moment these wings fail or are broken, public and private morals fall into decay.*"

M. Guillot, Examining Judge in Paris, writes: "It cannot escape the observation of any upright man . . . that the frightful increase of crime among young people has coincided with the changes made in the organization of public education. . . . The child who is not directed towards God, who does not feel himself under the eye of God, will, when he becomes a man, give himself up to pleasure and seek only self-interest and self-gratification. He does not even wait until he becomes a man. He treats with derision anything that is disagreeable to him: duty, sacrifice, even honor." (Paris qui souffre—Suffering Paris, p. 252.)

The Vice-President of the French Senate says: "The principal causes of the prevalence of crime is the insufficiency of moral instruction in our educational establishments, and I would also add, *the insufficiency of religious teaching.*" (See Études, 5 Feb., 1898.) In "Les Archives d'anthropologie criminelle" (The Archives of Criminal Anthropology), there is an article of M. Tarde, director of criminal statistics in the Ministry of Justice, France, from which the same con-

clusion flows clear as day. Similar avowals are to be found in Alfred Fouillée's "France from the Moral Point of View." Therefore, if God did not exist, religion would be a falsehood, and this falsehood would have produced the virtue, the peace, the joy, the innocence of a St. Stanislaus, the charity of a St. Vincent de Paul, and the holiness and heroism of numberless saints. It would be truth that produces degradation and vice.

In presence of such deductions, no man of sincerity can retain any doubt of the reality of the existence of God. "Yes," says Schiller, "that must be a divine law, which all the best of men acknowledge." "I have remarked," said Frederick Bastiat, "that the best among men are to be found among the believers," and he became a convert.

18. Objections. And now, must we spend time in answering the wretched sophisms devised by unbelievers to explain away and weaken the effect of this unanimous affirmation of human reason?

19. **1.** It is due to *prejudices of education,* say these freethinkers.

Answer. It would be ridiculous to deny the great influence of education. We can see every day how firmly rooted are the impressions and ideas received from infancy. However, this explanation is of no value here. All opinions which are only prejudices, customs, etc., vary among different nations and from age to age. Now, the belief in God is *universal, uniform,* and *perpetual.* Will anyone attempt to explain how this prejudice *alone* became *universal* and remained *unchangeable?* Only one reason can be found. This belief strikes its roots down deep into human nature, which alone, in the diversity of times and nations always and everywhere remains the same. (See above, end of n. 16.) (2) This objection is of no value whatever, particularly when it refers to learned men, who have studied the proofs of the existence of God, and found them thoroughly convincing.

20. **2.** Atheists object: It is fear that makes men believe in the existence of God. "Men, seized with terror at the sight of astounding phenomena of nature, and not knowing

their cause, attributed them to a Supreme Being." This was the theory of Lucretius of old: *Primus in orbe deos fecit timor* (Fear it was that first made the gods).

ANSWER. (1) In that case, whence comes the universally received idea of a God, a good God, full of mercy? How comes it that the ignorant savage sees at the side of the evil powers, which he strives to render favorable, a tutelar divinity willing to protect him, which the pagan calls Jupiter: *Deus optimus maximus,* the most good God, the great God; that the Christian people, because of His bounty, call Him the good God? (2) Again, this very fear, evidently a religious fear, presupposes the idea of God. (3) Finally, the natural cause of phenomena becoming once known, if the belief in God had no other foundation, it would have been completely lost. Now, we know that the most learned men, the greatest geniuses, have bowed humbly before the Author of the marvels of nature which they had learned to know and to explain. (See below, page 51, Section B, "Perfections of the Visible World.")

21. 3. But the unbelievers will say: It was the *legislators* and the *priests* that invented religion.

ANSWER. Then there were priests before religion was invented. As the existence of priests presupposes the pre-existence of religion, it is plain that religion is an antecedent fact, the existence of which cannot be attributed to priests. As to legislators, if they did recognize the influence of religious ideas upon the people, apparently it was because this idea pre-existed to their legislation. All they could do was to institute a few feasts, a few ceremonies, to impose this or that form of public worship, etc.

22. 4. It is also urged that for centuries men have been universally in the wrong regarding several kinds of truths and facts—for instance, the movements of the sun and stars; for both the common people and the learned men were entirely mistaken as to the true system of the sidereal world, as it was generally believed that the earth was stationary and the sun revolved around it every twenty-four hours, thus causing the succession of day and night. Now this is known to be

untrue. They may therefore have also been deceived as to their common belief in the existence of God.

Answer. We have already anticipated the answer to this objection. There is no possible comparison between these two errors. On the one hand it was question of a physical, sensible fact, of apparent motions, and we know how frequent are optical illusions, deceiving our sense of vision; on the other hand it was question of a truth of *reason,* a fundamental, capital truth. On the one hand we have a fact absolutely indifferent to the moral and social life of humanity, to man's last end, to his future destiny, and to his happiness. On the other hand we have an essential truth, where error would have had the most dreadful consequences. In the first case, an illusion easy to explain and fully explained; in the second, an inevitable, essential error, which would destroy all credit in human reason, supposed to be fatally and irreparably blind even as to the most elementary truths. Therefore the physical errors referred to by our opponents occurred because they were the result of sheer deception, which was obviously caused by the everyday misleading impressions of the senses.

Moreover, it is true that mankind were deceived regarding the system of the world; but we know also that in the course of time, in the sixteenth century of the Christian era, learned men detected the mistake of their ancestors and ascertained the true system, which is now universally received. Here we may ask our opponents, have learned men, assisted by the wonderful progress of the age, also detected any error in the universal belief in God's existence? By no means. On the contrary, that belief grows apace with civilization and adds millions of new witnesses with the advancing years. We must also remark that the great majority of men of the past generations, when scientific investigation was in its infancy, were altogether incompetent to grasp astronomical problems. Therefore, their testimony could scarcely be of any value in that regard. Hence atheists have no right to argue from mankind's deception concerning a purely physical phenomenon of no vital importance to any one, to their possible

deception on a moral truth affecting their highest interests, both here and hereafter.

23. 5. Finally, it is argued that the existence of God cannot be demonstrated, as it is an article of Christian Faith. Now articles of Faith must be believed on the authority of God, who reveals them, and consequently can not be subjected to the scrutiny of reason.

Answer. This objection is solved by the following distinction. Among the things proposed for our belief some surpass the power of human intelligence, such as mysteries, and some are such as to be within its reach. The former certainly cannot be known by any effort of rational investigation, hence they are believed and accepted as objects or articles of Faith, and not as things attained by the searching intelligence of man. These truths or mysteries, such as the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, could be made known to us only by divine revelation; they are, doubtless, above reason, but not contrary to it, as they do not contain any concept repugnant to the human mind (nn. 141–147).

As to the truths that may be attained by man's intellect, they can certainly be demonstrated and proved, not only because they belong to the deposit of Faith, but also on account of other motives, such as the evidence afforded by the exercise of human reason. In this latter class of truths we reckon the existence of God. It is plain then that the same object or truth can be known under different aspects and by different motives or reasons. If a given truth is known and adhered to only because divinely revealed, the assent constitutes the act of meritorious Faith. If, on the contrary, a truth is known and assented to also from motives ascertained by a process of reason, the adherence to such truth is evidently a rational act. Therefore, the fact of the existence of God, which has also been revealed to mankind, can be an object both of Faith and of reason, though under different aspects and from different motives, for God manifests Himself both by the voice of nature, and by that of revelation. As Arch-

bishop Ryan eloquently said: "The God who dictated the Bible, wrote the illuminated manuscript of the sky."

Conclusion. It is, therefore, impossible to reject the universal and spontaneous testimony of mankind. Impossible, especially, not to bow with respect before the incomparable testimony of so many men of genius and so many saints. Impossible not to see the truth in the marvelous fruits of the belief in God and the fatal consequences of atheism (nn. 38–39). We have laid great weight on the moral proof based on the universal, spontaneous and unbroken testimony of mankind, and this because it is in reality one of the most important, as it is the most popular. The heroic devotedness of an humble Little Sister of the Poor will ever remain a proof of the existence of God, more convincing, more triumphant, more powerful to bring about the conversion of unbelievers than the most cogent array of arguments that the cleverest philosophers could adduce. If in the course of centuries the existence of a Being, infinitely powerful, intelligent and free, the Creator and Ruler of the Universe, has met with opponents who ventured to deny it, history proves that the greatest thinkers of every age undertook its defense, and employed the manifold resources of their mighty genius in repelling the attacks (n. 14). Hence the belief of mankind in that momentous truth, a belief which Cicero wisely called the law of nature, shall be for all future ages, as it has been for the past, the sweetest comfort of the just, as it has been, and shall always be, the greatest terror of the wicked. Here may again be appropriately repeated the words of Lord Bacon in his essay on Atheism (p. 102): "None deny there is a God, but those for whom it maketh that there were no God."

The judgment of Quatrefages, an acknowledged authority in anthropological science, will give additional weight to our remarks. "We nowhere meet with atheism except in an *erratic condition*. In every place, and at all times, the mass of populations have escaped it; we nowhere find either a great human race, or even a division, however unimportant, of the race professing atheism. Such is the result of an inquiry, which I am justified in calling conscientious, and

which was begun before I assumed the professorship of anthropology. And I must here state that in these researches I have reasoned out my conclusions, not as a believer or a philosopher, persons who are all more or less under the influence of an ideal, which they accept or oppose, but exclusively as a naturalist, whose chief aim is to seek for and to state facts." (*L'Espèce humaine,* The Human Species, ch. xxxv, 4.)

II. THE VISIBLE WORLD PROVES THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

24. The existence of God may be considered under two different aspects, that is, either as an object of supernatural, revealed Faith, or as a truth of the natural order known by the light of reason (n. 23). It is the office of Theology to treat this sublimest of subjects as an article of divine Faith, whilst Philosophy investigates it as the object of human reason; and it is under the latter aspect that we now undertake to discuss it. Holy Scripture, tradition and the Vatican Council, at this stage of our discussion, are quoted simply as trustworthy witnesses to the truth in question. Their authority will be duly demonstrated and established in Parts IV and V of our Treatise.

As logic teaches us, processes of reasoning may be either *a priori,* and then we argue from cause to effect; or *a posteriori,* when we proceed from effect to cause. It is evident that the existence of God can have no cause, as He Himself is self-existent and the first cause. The reasoning, then, which leads us to the knowledge of God's existence, must be *a posteriori,* by which we argue from effects to their primary cause, from creatures to their Creator. Here we may ask, is this argument a valid one? Is it sufficient by itself to bring full conviction to man's mind? Yes, most certainly. The Sacred Scriptures bear witness to its validity. *"But all men are vain, in whom there is not the knowledge of God; and who, by these good things that are seen, could not understand Him that is, neither by attending to the works have acknowledged who was the workman."* (Wisdom, 13, 1.) And St. Paul writes: *"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven*

against all impiety and injustice of those men that detain the truth of God in injustice. Because that which is known of God is manifest in them. For God hath manifested it to them. For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made: His eternal power also and divinity: so that they are inexcusable.'' (Rom. 1, 18–20.) The verdict of the Scriptures finds its re-expression in tradition. Fathers, doctors of the Church, and ecclesiastical writers, in an unbroken chain of witnesses, which extends from the earliest times of the Church till the present day, have asserted the ability of reason to establish the existence of God. The Vatican Council has reasserted the teaching of Sacred Scripture and of tradition on this point. ''The same Holy Mother Church holds and teaches that God, the beginning and end of all things, can be certainly known from creatures by the natural light of the human reason, 'for the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.' '' (Sess. 3, De Revelatione, cap. 2.) And again: ''If any one shall say that the one and true God, our Creator and Lord, cannot be certainly known by the natural light of human reason through the things that are made, let him be anathema.'' (De Revelatione, can. 1.)

The unaided light of reason then suffices to establish the existence of God. And in fact the study of religion, which is inseparable from the existence of a Supreme Being, the object of man's worship, has been in all times, and among all nations, enthusiastically pursued by the greatest geniuses of mankind. The following names will suffice to substantiate our statement. Beginning with the philosophers of antiquity, whose works have happily reached us, the existence of a Deity presiding over minor divinities, and ruling the world, has been forcibly demonstrated by Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, Plutarch, Varro, and, above all, by the Roman orator Cicero, in his moral essays, breathing sentiments worthy of a better age.

Among the early Fathers of the Church, who proved this lofty and most cheering truth, we signalize Tertullian, Origen,

the St. Justin, Jerome, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Clement of Alexandria, Ambrose, Augustine, Leo, Gregory. Then there is the brilliant galaxy of schoolmen in the Middle Ages, among whom figure most prominently Bl. Albert the Great, Peter Lombard, St. Bernard, and that intellectual prodigy, St. Thomas Aquinas. And coming down to more recent times it is refreshing to see the most civilized nations of Europe vying with one another in bringing testimony to the sublimest of truths through their most gifted sons.

Thus Germany reckons Zimmermann, Stark, F. Jacobi, Voss, Klein, Schlosser, Haller, Stattler, Wiest, Zimmer, Sailer, Tanner, Stolberg, Frint, Dobmayer, Brenner, Schwarz, Liebermann, Möhler, Schanz, Jansen, Leibnitz. France can boast of her many distinguished writers, such as Bossuet, Fénelon, Massillon, Bourdaloue, Bergier, Balleux, Nonnotte, Pichon, Hespelle, Bullet, Guenée, Regnier, Chateaubriand, De Maistre, Ferrand, de Bonald, Eckstein, Lacoste, Nault, Roselly de Lorgues, Frayssinous, La Bruyère. Among the brightest intellects of the Italian Peninsula we may record the names of Bl. Robert Bellarmine, Segneri, Bartoli, Gerdil, Valsecchi, Tassoni, Muzzarelli, Dante, Tasso, Baronio, Muratori, Manzoni. Spain numbers among her most distinguished authors, Suarez, Gregory de Valentia, Cardinal Ximenes, Cardinal Gonzales, Balmes, Donoso Cortes, Mendive, Raimundo Sabande and Sarda y Salvany. England also paid her tribute to the great truth of the Creator's existence through the pen of many of her proud sons; such as Ven. Bede, Roger Bacon, Lord Bacon, Milton, Shakespeare, Addison, Hoffmann. And in more recent times, the three English cardinals, Wiseman, Manning and Newman have devoted their brilliant talents to the defense of the same rational truth. In the United States of America, besides the many able apologetic works issued by the Catholic University of Washington, the late Orestes Brownson alone amply suffices to uphold the honor of this country by the twenty volumes, which bear striking evidence to the giant intellect of that convert to the Catholic Church, in whose defense most of those vigorous pages have been written from the time of his conversion in the year 1844, to his lamented

death in 1876. Add to these the scientific celebrities mentioned further on, and you may then safely conclude that the grandest, noblest and holiest geniuses of the human race have devoted the choicest pages of their immortal works to the demonstration of that highest and loftiest of truths, the existence, the nature, and attributes of God. *Proferant quidpiam tale inimici nostri si valeant!* Let our opponents produce a similar array of names in defense of atheism if they can.

To the unlettered as well as to the learned *"the heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of His hand."* (Ps. 18, 2.) No thinking mind can fail to see how absurd it would be to suppose that "there can be a clock without a clock-maker (Voltaire), or that a chronometer can keep the exact time without an intelligent artisan to regulate the movements of its mechanism." And though it is not necessary to be a great philosopher in order to be able to rise from the work to the maker thereof, from the creature to the Creator, yet it is important to be assured that true science admirably confirms the spontaneous conclusions of the common sense of mankind. We shall, therefore, consult it, and we shall have the joy of seeing that "the existence of God is indeed," in the words of the distinguished naturalist Hirn, "the last word of modern science."

25. **Working of the Argument.** In the multiplicity of the beings that surround us, we perceive at once two distinct categories: *living beings* and *inert, lifeless matter;* a classification which has the advantage of being extremely simple and plain to all: "Whether a man be ignorant or learned," says Quatrefages, "it is impossible for him not to see in all that exists, two kinds of very distinct bodies: *inert bodies* and *organized bodies.*"

Moreover, the least attentive observation reveals most undeniable imperfections, amidst the beauties, the harmonies of nature, living or inanimate.

This simple statement enables us to classify the considerations that are to follow.

A. The imperfections of *living beings,* as well *as of inert*

matter, attest the existence of a *First Cause,* of a *Being necessary* and *perfect.*

B. Their perfections prove the intervention of a *Sovereign Divine Intelligence.*

A. Imperfections of the Visible World

26. **The Living Beings.** Life is undoubtedly a perfection, which places the most insignificant insect, the most lowly blade of grass infinitely above inert, lifeless, unorganized matter. But, in the visible world, among the vegetables and animals that surround us, life is seen to be affected with radical, essential imperfections.

Living beings are beings produced from others. The vegetable comes from another vegetable, the animal descends from progenitors. This is a law noticed by the most obvious, commonplace observation, and which the science enjoying the highest authority fully confirms.

The reader is here referred to another part of our work, "Christian Apologetics," article on The Bible and Biology, nn. 168, 170, where the materialistic theory of spontaneous generation, devised in opposition to the truth of creation, is triumphantly refuted. To the authorities there quoted, we add the following taken from "Scientific Sophisms," by S. Wainwright. "There must have been a time when inorganic elements alone existed in our planet. . . . Now is there a fact, or a shadow of a fact, supporting the belief that these elements, without the presence of any organic compound, and acted on only by known forces, could produce a living creature? At present, it is to us a result absolutely inconceivable." (Darwin, in *The Athenaeum* for 1863, p. 554.)

"What displeases me in Strauss," says Humboldt, "is the scientific levity, which leads him to see no difficulty in the organic springing from the inorganic, nay, man himself from Chaldean mud." (Letters to Varnhagen, p. 117.) "The evidence," writes Tyndall, "offered in favor of spontaneous generation is vitiated by error." (Belfast Address, p. 55.)

"It is not in any sense true," says Dr. Elam, "that any substance even distantly resembling organizable matter has been constructed by chemists. The line of demarcation between the organic and the inorganic is as wide as ever." (Wainwright, op. cit., pp. 55 seqq.) Then spontaneous generation, so far from being a scientific truism, is pronounced by the highest authorities of England, Germany and France, not to speak of other nations, to be an *astounding hypothesis, not supported by any evidence, absolutely inconceivable, utterly discredited*—a flimsy framework constructed upon imaginary or irrelevant facts, with a complete departure from every established canon of scientific investigation.

Is it necessary to remark that this essential dependence from a pre-existing organism is an *imperfection* of life? The being produced *depends* upon its progenitor as the effect upon its cause. Let us pause to consider this imperfection, and show at once that it proves the existence of a *First Producer,* of a being *not produced by another,* that is, *God.*

Demonstration. Starting from beings now living, let us ascend the long line of their ancestors. Where shall we end? We shall necessarily end either by reaching a first living couple of each species, or, according to the evolutionists, one or more rudimentary organisms, from which there would have come, by an incalculable series of transformations, all the species that now inhabit and have inhabited the earth. Up to this, let us carefully remark, there is no possible dispute or denial. No doubt the atheist would be delighted to establish as a dogma the eternity of life independently of the Creator! How he would triumph if it were possible for him, simply by gratuitous and unprovable hypotheses, to demonstrate the existence of these series of vegetables and animals unfolding themselves in the night of the past and producing that infinite chain of beings without any primary links!

But how is he to do it? Such a theory has been deservedly called a house of cards. The most simple common sense rises in protest against those infinite series, and what is worse, science, the very science of which the atheist boasts so much, whose champion and prophet he proclaims himself to be, sci-

ence, I say, emphatically asserts and proves that life did not always exist upon the earth. These are the words of a master upon this subject: "In spite of the uncertainty of many questions of detail, *Geology* shows it to be an incontestable fact that the transformations undergone by our globe from its first condition were *totally incompatible with the existence of the most elementary organism* up to the final state where life unfolds itself upon its surface, in all the splendor of its infinite variety." (De Lapparent, "Traité de Géologie," p. 21). "Geology and paleontology have admitted and determined a primary telluric phase where life *did not exist, where it could not exist.* They teach with full certainty that there were *azoic* times, an *azoic* bark or shell (granitoid gneiss, mica schist, gneissic granite, the first rough material of the formation of continents)." (Duilhé de Saint-Projet. "Apologie scientifique," Scientific Apology, 4th edit., 1897, p. 224.)

But then, what produced the first living beings?

Is it not now time to enunciate and to justify the philosophical principle of *sufficient reason* and the principle of *causality,* proved in metaphysics?

1. *The principle of sufficient reason.* "Nothing exists without a sufficient reason." In other words, it is impossible to find or imagine a being which has not, either in itself or in another, the reason of its existence. Must we pause to prove such an evident truth? But this principle is the foundation of all our judgments, of all our rational acts. From the first awakening of his intelligence, the child asks the *wherefore* of everything he sees; the learned man labors to discover the *reason* of the most mysterious phenomena; the philosopher stops in his profound and sublime speculations only when he has reached the last reason of things.

So great, indeed, is the inevitable necessity of this principle, that it cannot be denied without at the same time *implicitly appealing to it.* Would we consider a man serious in his assertions, who would reject it, whilst avowing at the same time that he did not base his denial on any sufficient reason?

2. *The principle of causality,* denied by some positivists, is but the application of the preceding principle. It is ex-

pressed as follows: "Every being that might not exist, and now exists, is produced by a cause." The usual formula, "there is no effect without its cause," is tautological. He who uses the word "effect" invariably speaks of a thing already done or produced. This second principle is in no way inferior to the first on the score of clearness.

Here is a being which might be non-existent. What is the sufficient reason of its existence? (a) It does not find it in itself, in its nature. For then it could no longer be indifferent as to existence or non-existence, for it would necessarily exist. (b) It did not make itself. To make is to act. Could it *act* before *existing?* A being must exist before it can act. As the Schoolmen say, *operatio sequitur esse*—action follows being. (c) It does not exist through chance. Chance is a word intended to indicate fortuitous circumstances, whose causes we ignore, unforeseen events. Chance has never been able to move even a blade of grass.

Hence there is only one sufficient reason for the existence of that new being: it has been produced by another, by a cause distinct from itself.

The principle of causality is absolutely essential to the progress, nay, to the very existence of science. To admit a fact or an effect without its proportionate cause is equivalent to the negation of science itself, since the object of science is to ascertain the causes or reasons of things." (Claude Bernard.) "The principle of causality constitutes the foundation of all sciences." (E. Naville in his "Modern Physics.")

Certain philosophers have denied the *idea of cause*, fearing lest its admission might prove fatal to their atheistic views. According to them, we only have the idea of *antecedent* and *consequent* facts, which succeed each other according to a determined law. It would be rendering homage to absurdity to answer such an argument. Night and day follow each other constantly, and, therefore, according to incontestable law of periodicity. Yet no one ever thought that night was the cause of day or day the cause of night. (Reid, cited by Van Hoonacker, *De rerum creatione ex nihilo*—of the creation of things from nothing.) The most obstinate positivist

distinguishes very well on occasion the difference between cause and a simple antecedent. Let some one venture to tread on his toes, and he will soon see how our positivist looks upon that act. If the atheist rejects the principle of causality, which we have demonstrated above, there are only two possible answers to which he may resort. The first, a most fanciful one, which Büchner himself, its author (quoted by Léon Bossu in his "Refutation of Materialism"), called a meagre subterfuge, is as follows: "The germs of all living things have existed from all eternity, and have only waited for the influence of certain external circumstances for their growth and development; or else these germs existed somewhere in the Universe, and then descended upon this our planet, and began to blossom, and live only accidentally, precisely in those places and times that happen to exhibit the necessary exterior conditions, etc."

The second answer involves another not less gratuitous and groundless supposition that of spontaneous generation, for the refutation of which baseless theory see n. 26, and nn. 168–170.

We may leave to the atheist the choice between those two hypotheses. Let him extricate himself, as best he can, from the absurdities of both.

As to his first reply, we have the right to ask him: Whence did those *eternal germs* come? How is it that they were not burned up and utterly destroyed during the period of the earth's incandescence admitted by all geologists? Should he have recourse to the second answer and appeal to spontaneous generation, we have already proved that it is an hypothesis utterly unscientific, if applied to the present case; entirely gratuitous for the past; and simply useless in all questions; for by supposing that inert, lifeless matter produces life, we do not solve the problem. For we can always urge the question: Whence does matter come? Who gave it being, who placed limits to its nature, who endowed it with force? etc., etc.

It is amusing to notice the curious fact that this question of the origin of life is the bugbear of atheism: "We must

choose," said Virchow, "between spontaneous generation and creation; but as to the first alternative, it must be said that no one has ever seen a spontaneous production of organic matter. *It is not the theologians that have been most prominent in rejecting the spontaneous generation theory, but our own scientific men.*" (Scientific Review, 8th Dec., 1877, Duilhé de Saint-Projet, "Apologie scientifique," pp. 251–252.)

We may now ask the atheist the following simple question: Was the cause (inert or living), which gave birth to the first living being, *itself* produced or not? If he answer *negatively,* he admits the existence of a non-produced being, which, not having a cause, is really the first cause of living beings. We accept this avowal, as we will soon show that this first cause cannot be anything but God.

If he answer *affirmatively,* we insist upon the question: But what is the cause of that cause? It must also have been produced. Ascend from cause to cause, you will only meet with beings that have been produced; and unless we admit a first unproduced cause, we are logically compelled to resort to an infinite series of effects and causes, which we shall soon show to be absolutely absurd. We may put the same argument in another, still clearer form, and reason thus: Existing beings may be either uncaused, or self-caused, or caused, viz., produced by a cause. The supposition is complete, as it is evidently impossible to add another member to this disjunctive argument. In the first place, for instance, that I am uncaused, that is, without a beginning, that I always was, in other words, that I am eternal, is simply inconceivable and absurd. For it is easy enough to recall antecedent times, when, as surely as I exist *now,* I did not exist *then.* My reason therefore rejects the first member of the disjunctive argument, for it involves an intrinsic contradiction, and therefore my reason cannot accept it. I know, I feel, and everything around me assures me that I am not an unproduced being.

Secondly, I need hardly state that the second member of the disjunctive argument is, if possible, still more preposterous than the first, for my reason cannot possibly conceive as

rational the supposition that there can be a self-caused being —a being causing its own existence. To produce one's existence is to act. Now, how can a being act before existence? No effect precedes its cause, it must rather follow it.

Coming now to the third member of the disjunctive proposition, I have the right to conclude thus: If an existing being, say myself, is neither uncaused nor self-caused, if it exists at all, it must have had a cause. The two first members of our argument are untenable, as being intrinsically self-contradictory and absurd. But is there any intrinsic absurdity or contradiction in saying that I am neither eternal nor did I make myself, but that I had a Maker, who is self-existing, eternal, and the Creator of all things?

This argument, borrowed from Cardinal Manning, "The Religion of a Traveller," retains all its logical force if applied to what constitutes the better part of man, his spiritual, intelligent, immortal soul, whose existence can be accounted for only by God's creative act.

27. **The Infinite Series.** Moreover, let us here remark that the idea of an infinite series of beings producing one another is repugnant to reason, for it is a contradiction in terms. Our mind cannot conceive as possible an infinite series of finite things, for there is a beginning and an end to a series, or it is no series; and if there be a beginning, we must finally come to admit the necessity of a Being which exists without the aid of any other being, having the cause or reason of its existence in itself; in other words, we come to admit a self-existing Being.

Besides, an infinite series of contingent beings, that is of beings that might be non-existing, is evidently impossible, because it implies an infinite number; but an infinite number is absurd. In fact, every number is either *odd* or *even*. We may ask the advocates of infinite series, to which of these two classes of numbers does the term infinite belong? If to the former, we may conceive a unit added on, which would make it even. If it be said that it belongs to the latter, we may make it *odd* by adding, either actually or mentally, a unit. It could not therefore have been infinite. If, on the contrary,

they tell us that the infinite series of numbers is neither odd nor even, or that the numbers are odd and even at the same time, they are propounding an absurdity. To illustrate the argument by a familiar example: Let us suppose a chain of unknown length suspended from a height. Everybody sees that no link is by itself capable of supporting the others, since none of them can even support itself. Hence we conclude that such a chain cannot remain thus suspended unless its first link be sustained by an extrinsic proportionate force. Would it not be silly or ridiculous for any one to say that this is true, if the length of the chain be finite: but that it is not true if the length of the chain is infinite, whilst it is clear that the supposition increases instead of diminishing the necessity of dependence upon an extrinsic force to sustain it; and yet the reasoning of the atheists leads them directly to that absurdity, when they assert the existence of an infinite series of contingent beings, independent in their existence of a necessary Being.

The atheists then cannot escape from the inevitable dilemma—either God or the absurd. Let us prove it.

1. Each term of the series is *produced;* it is therefore *entirely produced.* By multiplying the members of the series, we do not change the nature of the added quantities, for what is essential to each individual is likewise essential to the whole collection. If we have an assemblage of stone-blind men, each of whom is physically unable to see, can it be said that when put together they will enjoy the gift of sight? Moreover, which is the producer of the whole series? Philosophy calls *contingent* the being which does not necessarily exist. It is therefore a being which might not exist. The *necessary* being finds the reason for its existence in itself, in the perfection of its nature. This idea is rather hard to grasp, but it will be gradually elucidated as we go along. We must not lose sight of the fact that the existence of such a necessary being is not affirmed *a priori* or allowed without proof; it must be admitted under pain of absurdity.

2. Or we may argue thus: A being that has been produced has not in itself a sufficient reason for its existence; it is a

contingent being; it might have been non-existent. If there are only beings that have been produced, all, from the first to the last, might not have existed. Why do they exist? What is the sufficient reason or cause of their existence? Do not say: Each individual finds its sufficient reason in the preceding cause. This would be ridiculous; for this preceding cause does not possess in itself its *sufficient* and last reason. However far, however high the series may ascend, when can we stop at a being, of which we can say: Here is the sufficient reason of the series? Never! The atheist, in doing away with the first cause, is thus compelled to maintain that there never was a sufficient reason for the existence of his series. But this is absurdity itself; it is the denial of the first principles of reason. Therefore there does exist a first cause: there exists a being that finds in itself a sufficient reason for its existence, a being which has not been produced, a necessary being.

There remains now to prove that the being, which has not been produced, the necessary being whose existence we have proven, is nothing else but God, our Great God, the God of our *Credo,* the Supreme Creator and Ruler of the Universe, man's first beginning and last end.

This is what we shall do after having dislodged the adversary from his last entrenchments.

Concerning the question of the origin of life, we have seen the atheists stealing away in two directions. Some have thrown themselves upon the theory of infinite series; we have seen with what success (n. 27); others have conceded the existence of a being that has not been produced, a necessary, eternal being. We have contented ourselves with registering their declaration. It is now time that they should state it precisely.

What then, according to them, is the being which has not been produced, the necessary being?

"It is matter," they answer, "matter is the principle of everything that exists."

We must therefore show that matter is not the first cause. This its imperfections will presently reveal to us, and we

are thus brought at once to the second part of our proof (n. 26).

28. **2. Inert, or Lifeless Matter.** Preliminary Remarks. In their haste to suppress God, atheists do not seem to perceive that they deify matter, in granting to it the attributes of the Supreme Being, thus openly contradicting the most fundamental and inviolable axioms of materialism. According to them, matter is necessary, eternal, the first cause of all that exists. Before going into further discussion, we must first hear what our opponents have to say on the subject, and then make some observations.

"There is nothing *true*, nothing real, but what is sensible and palpable," Feuerbach declares. "The limits of experience and of the senses is also the limit of thought." (Karl Vogt.) "We admit in our day only the truths founded on *experience* and established by science." (J. Moleschott, "Circulation of Life," etc.) Is it perchance a fact that such concepts as eternity, necessity, justice, right, wrong, etc., are sensible and palpable, and that experience or experiments have demonstrated the eternity of matter?

The reader is here referred to the celebrated principle of Lavoisier: "Nothing is lost, nothing is added." That is to say that in chemical combinations or decompositions of existing and therefore produced or created contingent beings the total weight of the compound body is equal to the sum of the weights of its component parts. Concerning this, let us remark:

1. If the materialist wishes to remain within *the limits of experience*, as his principles require, he must consider this law as only an approximation. He never can verify it up to the last atom, which no microscope, however powerful, can reach.

2. This law, which no one denies, enunciates a fact. It would at least be incumbent upon him to show that the fact is the expression of an absolute necessity, and that if nothing is created in these days (a thing which we deny, for human souls, as we shall prove in the sequel, are continually created by God's omnipotent power), nothing could have been ever created before.

3. This law of the indestructibility of matter is so little contrary to Christian Faith and to the dogma of Creation, that many centuries before Lavoisier, St. Augustine, St. Thomas and others had taught, according to the philosophy of Aristotle, the preservation of matter (first matter) in the midst of the endless transmutations and combinations of bodies.

4. Reason easily confirms this fact. To create matter, to destroy it, is an act of sovereign domain. No creature, no secondary cause, can perform this feat; it is reserved to God alone. This truth, that God alone, the self-existing, omnipotent, independent Being, can create, is fully demonstrated in the works of Catholic philosophers, and the reader may consult among others those that we quote in this treatise. However, we deem it advisable to reproduce here one of the chief arguments commonly adduced in its support, which is as follows: No one can deny that each being, whether existing or possible, can possess only those forces, faculties and modes of acting, which are consentaneous and proportionate to its nature and manner of acting, according to the metaphysical principle, *operatio sequitur esse*—operation follows being—that is, the mode of acting in any being is in exact proportion with the mode or manner of existing of that being. Now, all contingent beings, whether spiritual or material, however perfect they may be, are always *essentially dependent beings,* not only as to their existence, which they received from a Superior Being, but also as to their manner of acting, which common sense tells us must be proportioned to the power or forces with which they are endowed. Therefore, they cannot be capable of producing any effect that implies a *complete independence* in the manner of producing it. But creation involves an action entirely independent; for to create a being, that is, to produce it out of nothing, is to give it existence independently of any pre-existing matter or substance. Hence creation is an action exclusively proper of that Supreme Being, which, as it is independent of all others in its existence and essence, so must likewise be independent in its manner of acting. God alone is such a being, for He alone is the necessary and self-

existing Being. Therefore, to Him alone can the world's creation be attributed as to its first and exclusively proper and sufficient cause. (It belongs to God alone to create—St. Thomas, Contra Gent. II, 21.)

We have then the right to deny the assumption that matter necessarily exists, a proposition *gratuitously* affirmed by the atheist in contempt of his own principles and against the protests and claims of common sense.

But lest it should be thought that our denial is unwarranted, let us bring the proofs sustaining our position. The necessity of matter is affirmed solely because the atheists pretend to find in it alone the first cause, the *sufficient reason* for the existence of the Universe. If, on the contrary, its insufficiency be once satisfactorily demonstrated, it will inevitably follow that its pretended necessity becomes a useless and irrelevant question. Let us then prove that "matter is not the sufficient reason for the existence of the Universe."

29. Demonstration. The complete total cause, or even the concurrence of causes producing a given being, should possess, at least *equivalently*, the perfection of that being; now matter is less perfect than many of the contingent beings which it is pretended to produce; therefore it is not the complete, total and sufficient cause of those beings. The *major* premise of the argument is evident. It is the cause that gives to the effect all its reality; now, how could it give that which it did not itself possess? *Nemo dat quod non habet*—no one can give what he has not.

The *minor* premise is not less evident. The life of a plant, the sensation of an animal, and especially the intelligence of man, are incomparably higher in the scale of beings than mere inert, lifeless matter. If senseless matter could ever produce organic, living, sensitive beings, it would give existence to things far more perfect, wonderful and beautiful than itself, a feat absolutely impossible, for no effect can be greater than its cause. Neither can any thing be found in the effect which does not exist in some way in the cause, otherwise the effect would contain something new, whose appearance cannot be accounted for. All this is verified in contingent beings. But

when we speak of God, the First and Self-existing Cause, then we assert that it *eminently* contains in itself that which is more than equivalent to any entity and perfection *formally* contained in the produced being.

In speaking of the wonderful effects witnessed in nature I refer to the vital, invisible forces, the active energetic principles that are building up the vast field of the vegetable kingdom. We should never know of their existence did we not surmise and discover it in their marvelous effects. Though entirely hidden from our gaze and impervious to the strongest microscope, yet they are as intensely real as the trunk, the branches, the leaves and the fruit of the tree we touch, feel and taste. What is said of the plant world must be affirmed with increased emphasis of the still more admirable animal world, immeasurably richer in form and operation. According to Leonard Lessius, S.J., there is more beauty in one sensitive soul, say of a bird, or of an insect, than in all the endless variety of vegetation put together. Here we are brought face to face with a boundless world of secret forces and powers. A whole universe of new existences discloses itself before our mind, silently displaying night and day without interruption a greater activity than the din of human industry has ever shown.

Are we to believe with materialists that dead, inert, and senseless matter is able to produce the rose, the pink, the lily, the pear, the peach and the plum, and every other living thing that springs from the soil? Can such powerless agent form the gorgeous plumage of the pheasant, and of the bird of Paradise? When prompted by reason and common sense we answer that such wondrous things are the work of the unconscious artists directed by the invisible hand of the supreme Artist, their Maker, then we talk rationally, and all reflecting minds will readily assent. This strikes me as being the most cogent argument that can be urged against materialists, who vainly strive to explain the wonders of creation independently of the Supreme Artificer, Almighty God the Creator and Ruler of the world. (See "Happiness and Beauty," by Right Rev. John S. Vaughan, D.D.)

Matter cannot be the *sufficient cause* of the contingent beings to whom acts, for instance, of maternal love, loyalty, heroism, honor, or genius must be attributed as effects to their proportionate cause. It is in vain that, to escape from this conclusion, the advocates of materialism suppose matter to possess some unknown kind of evolutionary force. Stripped of all scientific varnish, with which its supporters try to adorn it, this hypothesis would finally come to this, viz., to make the greater come from the less, the perfect from the less perfect, and will consequently prove itself intrinsically absurd by its evident opposition to the principle of sufficient reason (n. 26)

30. Remarks. (1) No doubt this argument does not prove the essential contingency of matter; but it shows, at all events, most clearly that matter is not the *sufficient* cause of contingent beings. Consequently, *there must be admitted a necessary being distinct from matter* and endowed with all the perfections, which we admire in the Universe, power, goodness, intelligence, etc. *By this being we mean God.*

(2) Arguments to establish the contingency of matter are not wanting, but they are somewhat difficult to understand. This need not surprise us. For the first cause, the absolutely necessary being, the ultimate reason of all things, constitutes the highest, the culminating point of human thought. To fathom the depths of infinity, such as is implied in God's essence, is no easy task even for the sublimest genius that ever lived. But no such attempt is here required, for our purpose is completely realized so long as our course of reasoning leads us to a sufficient knowledge of God as the Creator or Supreme Cause of all things.

Let us now turn our attention to another order of thought. If the imperfections of matter loudly proclaim the existence of God, it will be clearly seen that the perfections of the visible world are not less eloquent in announcing the same lofty truth.

But before entering into the development of this new argument, we intend to strengthen our position by the following appropriate considerations of Right Rev. Mgr. John S.

Vaughan in his able work entitled "Faith and Folly," pp. 173-181:

"Every scientific man, every learned geologist, be he Atheist, Agnostic or Christian, is constrained by the very sciences he professes to believe that there was once a period, however remote, when no man breathed throughout the realms of earth. He must also admit—not alone on religious grounds, please to observe, but on strictly scientific grounds—that further back still a more remote period must be admitted, in which no life of any kind, whether of bird or of beast, of reptile or of fish, existed on earth—a period, in fact, in which the earth could not have supported life for one instant. I refer especially to the period preceding the formation of the lowest solid rocks, when, as Prof. C. H. Hitchcock affirms, 'the whole globe was in a state of igneous fusion.' It is perfectly clear that no life could have existed on the earth when its temperature throughout was very much higher than, say, that of molten iron or brass. 'Even if we adopt Sir W. Thompson's theory,' writes Professor Huxley, 'that life on this planet may have been derived from life on some other, the difficulty of accounting for its origination is as great as ever. For the nebular theory, which is a part of the hypothesis of evolution, asserts that *all* worlds were once in the gaseous state.'

"How then, we may ask, did life commence? What produced life? What gave origin to grass and trees and endowed them with power of growth and expansion? Who formed the animals and endowed them with the power of feeling, instinct and locomotion? What power first introduced man into this world, where once he was not, and bestowed upon him the faculties of reason, conscience and free will? *We* reply, God. We make answer that God alone gave, and that God alone could give. The scientific Agnostic, on the contrary, questions his sciences; and all they can reply is: 'We don't know.' That man once had no existence on earth, they acknowledge to be certain. That he now has existence on earth is equally certain; but how he was first introduced into this terrestrial world they cannot say.

"Scientific men make the most valiant attempts to interpret and unravel each successive step in the formation of the earth; but here, at least, they are bound to acknowledge themselves baffled. Without pausing to refer to minor difficulties, we may remark that there are four great transitions, four deep yawning chasms which, with all their cleverness and ingenuity, scientists cannot bridge over.

"(1) The first is the passage from nothing to something. Yet this passage must be bridged over; for, though we may transport ourselves in thought to a time when the earth was but a ball of vapour, or even the finest and most subtile gas-cloud, yet we have still to ask: How and whence came the vapour, and what gave origin to the gas-cloud? The mystery still remains insoluble, unless a Creator and Supreme Fashioner be admitted. But, passing by this initial difficulty —a stumbling-block to atheistical science—we come to three other impassable gulfs:

"(2) The gulf between the inorganic and the organic;

"(3) The gulf between the organic and the sensitive;

"(4) The gulf between the organic and the sensitive on the one side, and the intellectual and the reasonable on the other.

"Even setting aside for the moment all questions of religion and revelation, we have no choice but to acknowledge the fact that geology itself testifies that the inorganic preceded the organic; that the organic preceded the sensitive, and the sensitive preceded the rational—the rational coming last in the series. That is to say, science itself compels us to admit that there was, after the bulk of the earth had been formed, a *first* plant, a *first* animal, and a *first* man. But how came the first plant? Every experiment (and an innumerable quantity has been made) tends to make it more and more incontestably certain that, in the order of nature, a plant or tree cannot arise except from the seed or germ or bud of a pre-existing plant. This is regarded now as quite a demonstrated fact. An immense number of most careful experiments has been made, even in recent years, with a view of testing this truth. Again and again men have labored to produce life from non-life; but no success has ever crowned their

efforts. Nay, they have been forced to accept as an axiomatic truth, the old and time honored dictum, '*omne vivum ab ovo,*' (all living beings come from other living beings). Science is incompetent to deal with the difficulty. But one answer remains, and that answer stands inscribed on the pages of a notable volume written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit many thousands of years ago, viz., '*God* said: Let the earth bring forth the green herb, and such as may seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after its kind,' etc. (Gen. 1, 11).

"So again, in the ascent from the vegetative to the animal world, a similar difficulty meets us. Of course, we have evidence in abundance all around us in support of the fact that one animal may be produced by another of its own kind. We see that a bird will produce a bird, and an insect an insect. But no one can explain scientifically, nor even so much as imagine, how the *first* bird or the *first* insect came into being. '*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.*'

"Science informs us that the earth was once a ball of fire. It then goes on to say that after it had cooled—a process extending, if we may trust Helmholtz, over a hundred and fifty millions of years—it was covered with a luxurious vegetation, though it is very careful to give us no clue as to *how* this vegetation was produced. Science further tells us that there were no animals until after the hills and valleys had become green with plants and herbs. And that is certainly reasonable enough, for in the absence of all seeds and of all green food neither bird nor beast could have survived a week.

"Hence, science and common sense, as well as Faith, represent to us an earth beauteous with the number and variety of its grasses, plants and shrubs, but at one period without a bird or a beast, a butterfly or a bee. We might (if we can imagine ourselves living at so remote a period) have wandered through the forests and lost ourselves in the dense jungles; but we should never have encountered the life and motion with which we are now so familiar. No birds sang among the tangled branches; no mischievous squirrels gnawed the clustering nuts; no bees hummed and buzzed amid the wild ferns and creeping lycopods; no gorgeously painted

butterfly opened its mealy wings to the subdued sunlight; no 'shard-borne beetle, with its drowsy hum, rung out night's yawning peal,' as Shakespeare would put it. No; only the shadows flitted to and fro, only the rain drops pattered. There was a period when on the land there was no life but plant-life, and when no sentient being existed in wood or fell.

"So says science. But later, science goes on to inform us, animal life appeared. Yes, 'appeared!' What are we to understand by that ambiguous expression 'appeared'? Who introduced animal life where previously there was none? Whence came the lion and the leopard, the dog and the deer, the mole and the mouse, and all the myriads of other animals? Whence? Science, in the person of its irreligious votaries, is puzzled; science is troubled; science hangs down its head and cannot offer any answer that will satisfy any reasonable man; it can suggest no explanation which is anything better than a mere subterfuge. The Agnostic dares not confess that God created the beasts, and all that lives and moves in sea and earth and air, because that would oblige him to acknowledge the existence of a Supreme and Infinite Being who rules over all things, and he would rather believe any nonsense than confess God.

"What, then, do such men say? They would have us accept any absurd and grotesque hypothesis rather than allow the existence of God. They will assure us that little by little animals were brought forth by a slow process of development; and that, after many convulsions and changes of fortune, the various beasts were evolved from—well, *since nothing but earth and vegetation then existed*—say from a rock or a tree. We thus see to what shifts even the most learned are reduced, and to what absurdities they are driven, so soon as they deny and denounce the doctrine of an all-wise and all-powerful Creator.

"Yet these, alas! are the men who speak scornfully and with curled lip about our credulity and superstition. That life appeared, where previously there was no life, and that animals existed where previously there were none, are hard-and-fast facts which do not admit of any serious controversy.

Yet sooner than admit that beasts were created by the omnipotent hand of God, they will try to persuade us that they were developed from plants or vegetables; which, in their turn, were evolved from mud or protoplasm, and I know not what besides. Who can bring his reason to accept such an astounding statement? As well persuade us that the prehistoric trees produced legs of roast mutton and hot-buttered French rolls.

"No, the more we inquire into the ways and teaching of science, and the better acquainted we become with the earth and its history, the more the conviction is forced upon our minds that there is above nature an Infinite Force ruling nature; and above the life begun in time, an Eternal Life which had no beginning; and above finite intellect and will, an infinite Intellect and an uncreated Will. An Intellect, indeed, which made all things, maintains all things, and rules, controls, and moulds all things according to its own supreme pleasure. Or, to express the same thoughts in another way, that there is in short a God, all-mighty and all-wise, who reigns over the Universe, poises the earth on three fingers, and holds the oceans in the hollow of his hands; to whom be honor and glory and empire for everlasting ages. Amen."

B. Perfections of the Visible World

31. It would be impossible, it must be evident, even to give a sketch of the magnificence of the Universe. What necessity is there of doing so? Who has not read hundreds of enchanting descriptions of all these splendors? Who does not cherish in his mind the memory of spectacles, grand and sublime, delicate and graceful, which it has been given to him to contemplate? Now, these marvels, every noble soul must feel it, do more than charm the senses. They *ravish,* they raise our thoughts, our hearts, to the very throne of God. As a master-piece bespeaks the artist, nature, by the thousand voices of its marvels, cries out to us: *Ipse fecit me.* It was He Who made me!

Is this an *illusory impression,* a vain *prejudice,* or is it the

spontaneous cry of reason? We shall answer this question by establishing the three following points:

1. An admirable order reigns in the Universe.

2. This order cannot be anything else than the effect of an intelligent cause.

3. This intelligence is divine.

32. Demonstration. **1. Admirable Order reigns throughout the Universe.** The reading of the driest manual of science is a thousand times more eloquent than the most poetic descriptions. Let us, however, cast a rapid glance over the world.

A. On the surface of the earth. (*a*) See for instance the *mineral kingdom.* Order is seen in the geometric forms of crystals, in the mathematical laws which govern chemical combinations and physical phenomena. What does the most exact science do after all but verify more precisely the words of the Holy Book: *"Omnia in mensura, et numero, et pondere disposuisti," Thou, O Lord, hast ordered all things, in measure, and number and weight.* (Wisdom 11, 21.)

(*b*) To admire the order of the *vegetable kingdom,* is it not sufficient to cast a glance upon the smallest blade of grass? What would our wonder be if we were to study the structure of a plant, its delicate organs, the marvels of its flowering, fructification and germination; and the *variety* of leaves, of flowers of the same type, the *stability* of type in the midst of diversity.

(*c*) In the *animal kingdom:* What masterpieces of organization from the infusoria to man! To understand it thoroughly one should penetrate the secrets of anatomy and physiology, study the living cells, the tissues, the nervous system, the circulation of the blood, the structure of the organs, instinct, etc.

Moreover, what about the divisions of the vegetable and animal kingdoms into groups, branches, classes, families, endless varieties, and their reciprocal subordination? Is not this a striking evidence of order?

B. Now, if we rise to more general considerations, what magnificent order is revealed by astronomy as existing in our

solar system, whose movements are regulated with such rigorous precision.

"The more science advances, the more this *great law of unity* in material elements, in the functional compounds formed of these elements, in the constituents of the stars, and *the part they play in the immensity of space*, is established and confirmed." It was thus that the learned scientist J. Janssen expressed himself, in the joint public meeting of the five academies, October 24th, 1896. See *Annual of the Office of Longitudes* for the year 1897, App. E, p. 11.

We here supplement our considerations by the following appropriate remarks of T. W. M. Marshall in his able lecture entitled "Order and Chaos," p. 21, sqq.:

"Examine the material creation, and find, if you can, a single department of it which is not under the inexorable reign of *Law*. From the stately march of the planets in their orbit to the insect in the narrow home, in which every want of its ephemeral life is provided, in every corner of the Universe, and in every form of matter, animate or inanimate, Law and Order assert their despotic and uncontested dominion. Even the king of poets understates the truth, when he says:

> 'There is nothing, situate under heaven's eye,
> But hath its bound, in earth, and sea, and sky.'

"When the great Kepler strove to penetrate the mystery of our planetary system, and to correct the astronomical errors of the Egyptian Ptolemy, he was startled by this discovery. He found that the various planets, which revolve in that system, appeared, at a first glance, to have been formed and projected into space, without order or method. They all varied in dimension, in density, in velocity, and in their distance from the sun. In the smaller planets, or asteroids, as Vesta and Pallas, a man could spring into the air sixty feet, and return to the ground without a shock; while in other planets his own weight would crush him to atoms, so great is the force of attraction. In a word, they differed in every

point, and seemed to have no mutual relation. Here, then, was a singular apparent absence of law and order. When Kepler saw this, inspired partly by his genius and partly by a profound religious sentiment, he said to himself: 'That is not so! There *is* a law, if I could only find it, for God is never at variance with Himself.' And then, after many a patient toil and vigil, he made that splendid discovery which astronomers call the Third Law of Kepler. Not only did he find a law even in this apparent confusion, but a law which could be expressed with mathematical precision, which bound together in a magnificent symmetry every planet in our system, and which disclosed to him and to us this truth—that the squares of their periodic times are proportioned to the cubes of their mean distances from the sun. It was then that the illustrious student, full of gratitude to Him from whom all knowledge comes, cried out, with a rapture which was more religious than scientific: 'I have stolen the golden vases of the Egyptians, to build up a tabernacle for my God.'

"One more illustration. If there be anything in nature, anything of which man's senses can take cognizance, which appears to belong undeniably to the realm of Chaos, it is surely the tempest, which, on sea or land, bears ruin on its wings, leaves ruin in its track, and seems to have the same relation to Order which Madness has to Reason. But we have learned by this time to distrust appearances, especially when we are talking about the works of the Creator. And what is the fact? Captain Maury of the United States Navy (1873), and the British Colonel William Reid (1859), have shown that even the hurricane and the cyclone, in all their might and fury, are as docile to the reign of *law* as the humblest machine constructed by human ingenuity is submissive to the hand that made it, and the English writer here referred to has actually given to his book this significant title, 'The *Law* of Storm.' "

Conclusion. Order exists; it is seen in the infinitely small as well as in the infinitely great. This order is *stable* and *constant;* it governs myriads and myriads of beings. What matters it that there are some monsters, some partial instances

of disorder? Either these are *apparent* and only impeach our ignorance, or they are *real*, and what do they prove? That the order is not perfect? It should not be, nor can it be. And in truth, far from testifying against order, these anomalies attest it in their way. If they shock us, is it not because they are an exception to the universal law? (See St. Thomas, "Physicor. Quæst." 14.)

In this connection we should remember that, as Catholic Philosophy teaches, neither this world, nor the order established in it, can be considered as *absolutely* the best, if, by *absolutely the best,* we mean so perfect that nothing could be more perfect. Whatever God may create is finite, and therefore infinitely distant from God Himself, the one absolutely perfect Being. Nevertheless, creation as a whole, and the laws governing it, are said to be *relatively the best,* inasmuch as they are best adapted to reach the end, which God had in view in the creation of the Universe (nn. 61, 62. This doctrine, upheld by St. Thomas (Sum. Theol., I, q. 25, a. 6) and his followers, is styled *moderate optimism,* and as such it is diametrically opposed to the *exaggerated false optimism* of Leibnitz (1716), of Malebranche (1715), and of Rosmini (1855). (See Boedder, S. J., "Natural Theology," pp. 124 and 467.)

33. **2. The Order of the World is the Work of an Intelligence.**

That is the inner conviction of every man. How can we refuse to acknowledge the most profound wisdom in the Author of all those marvels? Why should we be called upon to support by arguments this conviction which the proudest geniuses, the most illustrious men, delight to share in common with the most illiterate?

Order calls for an intelligent cause; for wherever we find parts and agents united and disposed in a regular manner, concurring as so many means to a common end, we are forced to recognize an intelligent cause, which knows and adapts them to their end.

In the XII book of *Laws* Plato declares that the order of celestial revolutions proves the existence of a supreme intelli-

gence, and he shows that far from favoring atheism, the study of astronomy condemns it.

"In contemplating the earth, the sea, the heavens . . . can we doubt that there is a great God and that all this world is His work?"—Aristotle, cited by Cicero, "De natura deorum" (Of the Nature of the gods, II, 37.)

Galien, after describing the human body, exclaims: "It is not a book that I have written, but a hymn that I have sung in honor of the Deity." "I thank Thee, Sovereign Creator and Lord, for all the joys that I have felt in the raptures into which *the contemplation of Thy works* has thrown me." (Kepler.) "In the regular movements of the planets and their satellites, in their direction, their plan, the degree of their rapidity, there is *an evident trace of design*, the testimony of the intervention of a cause, which is neither blind nor fortuitous, but which assuredly is most skillful in mechanics and geometry." (Newton to Doctor Bentley.)

"The eternal immense God, the all-powerful God, knowing everything, able to do everything, has passed before me. I have not seen His face, but the reflection of Him suddenly taking possession of my soul, has thrown it into a state of rapturous ecstasy and admiration. . . . In all His works, even the smallest, the most imperceptible, what strength! what wisdom! what undefinable perfection!" (Linnæus.) "I contemplate this Universe, so vast, so ingeniously arranged, so magnificent, and I say to myself: this cannot be the effect of chance, but it must be the work of an all-powerful and intelligent Being, as superior to man as the Universe is to the most cleverly constructed machines." (Napoleon I. See Thiers, "Hist. of the Cons. and the Empire," vol. III, p. 220.)

"All that, by universal consent, characterizes the conceptions of genius, has been displayed in the general plan of nature, with a wealth, a perfection of detail, a complexity of relations that baffle all human wisdom; in the presence of such astonishing marvels, who is it that does not see continuous manifestations of an intelligent mind?" (Agassiz, "Species and Classification," p. 173.)

"We are now all prepared to comprehend and accept as

eminently reasonable the traditional belief in one God, the Father, all-powerful, Creator of Heaven and Earth. To deny God is something like a fatal fall from a dizzy height. Can we say that those mighty globes that revolve in space, that the wonders of nature are the result of blind chance? It is false to assert that true science has ever led men's mind to such conclusions." (H. Faye, member of the Institute, on the "Origin of the World," introduction.)

"Botany has at all times had the privilege of making saints and sages . . . *it admires the Creator in His works.*" (Admiral Jurieu de la Gravière, President of the Academy of Sciences, meeting of Dec. 27, 1886.)

It would be superfluous to add the testimony of Bossuet, Pascal, Fénelon, etc.

What then is the cause of this admirable order?

1. Can it be *chance?* But chance, we know, is but a "word." This pretended "master of the world" is not a real being; it has never moved the smallest atom the space of an inch. Besides, if it could be the cause of anything, it would, at the best, according to its definition, be nothing but disorder or chaos.

2. Would it be *nature?* This is a more specious answer, but quite as empty as the preceding. What is *nature?*

This is perhaps the best instance of "cheating with words." "Who is that dame?" asks de Maistre. The word *nature,* avows Condorcet, is one of those words used all the more frequently from the fact that they who hear it or who pronounce it rarely attach to it any precise meaning (cited by Littré, at the word *nature*).

Your *nature,* says Voltaire, is only a *word* invented to designate the universality of things (*Ibid.*).

(*a*) Would it be "the sum or aggregate of the beings that form the visible universe?" But if we take it in this sense, we must say that nature presupposes a pre-established order; far from causing, it results from it.

(*b*) Is it *the system of laws* that regulate the existence of things and the succession of beings? But a system of laws presupposes a legislator; who is he?

(*c*) Is it the first principle of the actions and properties of beings? Or is it a kind of *universal* principle, something like the Great Whole, the God-matter of pantheism, inexhaustible source of absurdities? Is it the *particular* principle of each being?

Be it general or particular, this principle accounts for the order reigning in the Universe, only on condition that it is intelligent or directed by an intelligence. Let us demonstrate our position.

3. *The only cause of order is an intelligence.*

What! Was it then a being ignorant of the laws of optics that made the wonderful instrument which is called the eye? We may here recall the words of the royal psalmist (Ps. 93, 8–10): *"Understand ye senseless among the people, and you fools be wise at last. He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? or He that formed the eye, does He not consider?"* As we reached this point, we came across an able article in the *Messenger* for January, 1903, by James J. Walsh, Ph.D., M.D., from which we quote the following passage suitable to our present subject: "They tell of Helmholtz, the inventor of the Ophthalmoscope, one of the greatest men of science of our times, that in his earlier years of observation upon the structure of the eye, he thought he discovered many defects of construction, many errors, many possibilities of accident. Later in life, however, when, upon further investigation, he found the wonderful adaptability of that delicate organ to its special purposes, and had come to realize what marvelous corrections had been supplied to remedy what, at first glance, seemed almost fatal defects, he could scarcely express sufficiently his admiration of the simplicity of the means employed to obtain such excellent results." See in any manual of anatomy the innumerable and minute conditions required to make the eye capable of vision. See "Human Physiology," by J. D. Steele, p. 187, for an excellent description of the organ of sight.

Shall we say that billions of atoms, *indifferent as to any combination,* would have met, and without intelligence, without direction, without purpose, would have formed these organisms, whose complexity, whose delicacy disconcert genius

and defy the most scrutinizing analysis? Must we believe that these same atoms have adapted the organs, for instance of sight and hearing, to their respective functions, following in all this a *determined, stable* plan, suitable to each species, to each race; producing in each being its common instincts and its proper specific aptitudes? Moreover, these machines blindly constructed, would be able, according to the materialists, to repair, rebuild and propagate themselves! Is not all this supremely absurd? Let us not forget that in the atheistic hypothesis, organic life must have spontaneously issued from inert, lifeless matter, and this in turn from primitive chaos. Let us not forget especially that, according to the atheistic theory, the intelligence of man, *genius itself would have had no other origin;* and that accordingly the master-pieces of industry and art, science, poetry, eloquence, would have had no other *first* and *ultimate cause* than blindness and unintelligence. It is more absurd to suppose that the marvelous order ruling the endless phenomena and laws of the Universe is the result of chance, and not the work of supreme intelligence, than to believe that the fifteen volumes of the Encyclopædia Britannica or the immortal poems of Homer, Virgil, Dante, Milton, or the Summa of St. Thomas, or the dramas of Shakespeare, could be compiled from types accidentally issuing from a little hole of a huge revolving cylinder full of types. A similar comparison was used more than two thousand years ago by the great Roman orator and philosopher Tullius Cicero (De natura deorum, II, 37), where he reasons thus: "If the accidental meeting of atoms has been able to produce the world, why could it not also construct a temple, or a palace, or a city, things much less laborious, and more easy than the making of the Universe." One more and last reflection will render the demonstration irresistible. Among *living beings* order assumes a particularly evident character; it is *preconceived,* it is *designed,* it is *willed.* Listen to Bossuet: "We see for what purpose each thing was made. Who would venture to say that the blood was not made to nourish the animal, that the stomach and the liquids which it throws out through its glands, are not made to prepare by

digestion the formation of blood; that the arteries and the veins are not made in the manner required to contain the blood, to carry it everywhere through the body, to make it circulate continually?'' And after having continued further this striking enumeration, he says: ''The man who would say such things might as well assert that a house is not made to lodge people in; in short, he would be a stupid creature not deserving to be spoken to.'' (Knowledge of God, IV, Review of Scientific Questions, January, 1898.)

Yes, a stupid man; for the adaptation of means to an end has always been regarded as a manifest proof of intelligence. The reason is simple; the end to be attained is in the *future*, and the future, if unknown and unforeseen, is purely and simply nothingness. And hence its actual influence on the designer is absolutely null, consequently there would be nothing in the world bearing evidence of design.

34. This conclusion will appear still more evident, if we briefly examine the ridiculous explanations given by our opponents. Besides chance and blind necessity they put forth:

35. (*a*) *The plastic influence of instinct or habit.* As if instinct and habit do not suppose an organism *already constituted* and ready to act!

(*b*) The influence of *environment.* This is manifestly contrary to truth. Let us examine, for instance, what happens in a bird's egg during incubation. It is a living machine that is being built up in a narrow envelop, separated from the exterior world by impenetrable veils and yet how many adaptations to the future surroundings which as yet exert *no influence* are realized! Without there is light; within, in spite of the darkness, there are being constructed those optical instruments called eyes. Without noise and sounds of every description reign in the air; within are formed those acoustic instruments which are termed ears. Without grow vegetables and animals that are to serve for nourishment; within are constructed tubes, retorts and complicated apparatus to serve for digestion and assimilation of food; without in fine various mediums, earth, water, air; within are being built up organs of locomotion best adapted to the medium in which the animal

is to live on the earth, or in the water, or in the air . . . the *pre-established* harmony is complete; it is so perfect that nothing is wanting, nothing superfluous. (Saint-Ellier, L'ordre du monde; Order in the Physical World, p. 170.) Environment may modify, wear out and consume or develop an existing organ, but it cannot create one.

36. (*c*) *Natural selection.* Here again we have the same answer. In reality, Darwin, its inventor, shows us this *natural selection,* watching everything with unfailing *attention,* a *care* and a *sagacity* which never fail to attain their object. If these are not vain words, they are the ill-concealed avowal of an over-ruling intelligence; the necessity of an intelligent designer is undeniable. But what and who is this designer?

37. **3. The Intelligent Designer is Divine,** is God, the Supreme Creator and Ruler.

(*a*) In contemplating the immensity of the Universe with its prodigious multitudes of organized beings, the imagination and intelligence are confounded and overpowered by their greatness, and feel themselves as if by instinct in presence of the Infinite. And yet the Universe being limited in its extent, as in its perfections, the order regulating its activity would seemingly require nothing more than *a very great* wisdom and power, though not a *divine* or infinite one. A moment's reflection will be enough to show to us that the spontaneous voice of our reason has not deceived us. We are in presence of God the Supreme, omnipotent, infinitely perfect Being.

(*b*) In fact, this order, whose existence we have just established, in other words, the *intentional* form or disposition of things in the Universe, is not merely an artificial adaptation, something purely accidental or external; but it is their interior, essential and substantial form, viz., their very nature and essence, and is, consequently, absolutely inalienable from the things themselves. It does not merely belong to them, it is within them; one with them; and is irrevocably identified with the idea we form of them. Thus conformity to design is the essential mark of an organism, without which it cannot

be conceived. And as He, who determined the form, determined also the essence—for we are speaking of essential forms —this same Being must be not merely the Architect, but the Creator of the world. (See Hettinger, "Natural Religion," p. 89.)

We freely admit that the argument from design does not immediately and directly lead us to the knowledge of God as an infinitely perfect Designer, for a limited order, such as that of the present finite world, does not postulate an infinite designer. But this argument is ultimately based on the metaphysical proof discussed above (n. 24), when we argued from the existence of contingent beings to that of the necessary Being, for God is not only the Ruler and Regulator of the World, but He is also the efficient Cause of all ordered, regulated beings.

Moreover, the proposition assumed by our opponents, that a finite effect does not require the action of an infinite cause, is not universally true, for any created being, however limited, demands for its existence the intervention of an infinite, omnipotent cause, as our forthcoming treatment of Creation will prove.

This is substantially the reasoning of St. Thomas, who (Summa Theol., I, q. 103, a. 1) speaks thus: "The natural necessity inherent in those things, which are determined to one type, is a divine impress directing them to that end, just as the necessity, by which the arrow is directed to a determined mark is impressed, not by the arrow, but by the archer. There is, however, this difference; the divine impress gives creatures their nature; the human impress only acts on the nature already created."

We, of course, fully concur with the views that have just been stated, particularly on account of their being in harmony with the thoughts of that great luminary of the Church, St. Thomas Aquinas. This view is confirmed by the following argumentation. The marvelous order prevailing in the world evidently proves the existence of an Author (cause) and Ruler essentially distinct from the world itself; a Ruler, I mean, most wise, most beautiful, most good, since he is the

most provident cause or origin of all the beauty that we admire, and of all the benefits that we enjoy. To those who hold that from all this it does not follow that the Author and Ruler of the aforesaid order must be the first cause that has created the world, displaying such wonderful order, we answer thus: From the astounding order regulating the phenomena and movements of the Universe we may not demonstrate *immediately or directly* the existence of the Creator of the Universe itself; but we can, without doubt, demonstrate it *mediately* or *indirectly* by arguing as follows: This author of that marvelous order, this being most wise and most powerful, either is self-existing, or is made by another. If it is self-existing, uncreated, we have obtained our point, viz., the existence of a being, that comes from no other being, who is the first cause of the Universe, the Creator of all existing contingent beings. If, on the contrary, they reply that the Author of the wonderful order, seen in every part of the Universe, is not self-existing, but comes from another being, we shall have to urge the question: Whence does this other being come? and so on indefinitely, until we reach a being self-existing, from which the ruler of the world, whoever he be, must have received his own existence, and from whom originated the things to be ordered, and the power itself needed to establish that order. Now God alone is such a being. Therefore the physical argument derived from the striking order, harmony, laws and beauty witnessed in the world and all the beings it contains, can prove the existence of God. (See Urráburu, S.J., "Theodicea," vol. I, p. 131.)

(*c*) If the regulating intelligence of the world is not divine, whence and from what has it received its origin? Unless recourse is had to a *useless* infinite series refuted above (n. 27), it must be acknowledged that this ordinating intelligence springs from a first and Sovereign intelligence, which is the necessary Being, that is God.

Thus *the perfections of the visible world prove the existence of God.*

As a fitting conclusion to the second proof of the existence of God, we here quote a remarkable passage from the latest

work of Monsignor John S. Vaughan's "Earth to Heaven," pp. 8–14.

"We will select one of the most ingenious, beautiful and complicated instruments that man has ever invented, and then we will compare it with one of the most ordinary objects in nature, and it will be apparent that the natural object is immeasurably the more marvellous. And consequently that if the first is inconceivable in the absence of an intelligent author, so the second is not merely equally, but still more inconceivable in the absence of an intelligent author. Here is a clock. See with what consummate skill it is put together. The wheels, the main-spring, the hair-spring, the lever escapement, the dial, the hands, the screws and rivets, and its fifty other accessory parts are all in their proper places. Each is related to each, and so admirably adjusted that the clock will indicate accurately the hours, minutes and seconds as they go by. At each hour, and at the half and quarter hours, the exact time is struck upon a gong, so that one may hear as well as see how the day advances. What a splendid product of man's intelligence! No mere blind, unconscious force could ever construct a clock such as I have described, even though a score of eternities were allotted to the work. But if chance cannot construct a clock, still less can it construct a plant, a flower, a vegetable, a fruit, or an insect, for the simple reason that every one of these things, when carefully examined, is found to be immeasurably more marvellous than any piece of human mechanism.

"Take such a familiar object as a butterfly. As a work of art it surpasses a clock in an immeasurable degree. It may not be such a useful, but it is a far more wonderful object, and an infinitely greater power and intelligence is needed to make a butterfly than to make a clock. Any one with a grain of sense can see that, if a clock requires intelligence in its maker, a butterfly requires far greater intelligence in *its* maker. Contrast the two. The clock moves, but it has no life. It requires periodical winding; the insect needs no such attention. The clock is made up of many parts cunningly pieced together; but the butterfly is composed of many more parts,

and much more admirably put together. Contemplate its beautiful wings, see how exquisitely they are adorned with gold and sapphire, and how richly stained with the most gorgeous coloring; examine the muscles by which they are worked to and fro, and so carry the body through the air. See the six delicate and exquisitely-proportioned legs, with their subtle joints, their sinews and muscles; contemplate the various organs. Why! even the eye alone, with its complicated parts, throws every mere human work in the shade. Take the butterfly as it stands, and, compared with it a clock is but a rude, crude, unskilled, and inartistic object. Further, who is there among men with genius and intelligence enough not only to manufacture a clock, but so to manufacture it that one clock may in its turn construct other clocks like to itself? He Who made the butterfly so fashioned it that it can reproduce others according to its kind. But can a watchmaker, however gifted, however skillful and clever, so construct a watch that it may give birth to other watches? Can he so design a chronometer that it can of itself bring forth a whole litter of young chronometers, each perfect, each the image of its parent? Ah, you smile at the bare notion as being too ridiculous and impossible to entertain, and you do well. Yet a single butterfly will bring forth several hundreds of butterflies like to itself during the course of a single season. How is it possible that men can witness this and countless other similar marvels, and yet be stupid enough to deny the existence of a reasonable and intelligent cause, or, in other words, the existence of God presiding over nature? They strain at the gnat but they swallow the camel!

"Though they cannot bring themselves to believe that a common coin, or a steam-engine, or a clock, can possibly have come into existence without a living and intelligent person to make it, yet other things, which are acknowledged to be vastly more wonderful, admirable and beautiful, they calmly ascribe to chance, to mere accident, to blind physical forces, to the survival of the fittest—yea, to anything whatsoever provided they need not acknowledge the only true Cause, the Infinite, Eternal, and Omnipotent God and

Lord of Heaven and earth. I would not write on such a subject were it not for the melancholy fact that there are many, even in this modern and progressive age, who seem more willing to renounce reason itself, to contradict the clearest dictates of common sense, and to make themselves ridiculous in the eyes of honest Christians, than to openly believe in God and to confess Him to be the Author of the Universe. The Holy Spirit tells us that 'the fool said in his heart there is no God.' Observe the clause—'in his heart'—not in his mind, not in his reason. No, it is a rooted unwillingness to obey and love God that causes men to try and persuade themselves that no such Divine Person exists, and in this effort they too often succeed. 'The wish is father to the thought,' as the poet says. It is their hearts, their desires, that speak, not their reason. In the inner depths of their own consciences they know that God does and must exist, and that the Universe would remain forever a wholly and absolutely inexplicable riddle unless we accept the doctrine of an intelligent Creator—a doctrine of reason and common sense. Man cannot disguise from himself the fact—if he reflects at all. That every object around and about him proclaims the presence of God far more certainly than the human footprints on the sand proclaims the presence of man. For the traces of God's creative power are on every leaf and on every blade of grass. We cannot deny Him without dethroning reason, stultifying ourselves, and committing an act of intellectual suicide—from which may God in His mercy preserve us.''

III. CONSEQUENCES OF ATHEISM AND ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

38. To demonstrate the untruth of an hypothesis, it has always been found sufficient to show the absurd consequences to which it leads, and this method, though indirect, is not less effective. Hence, though most of the absurdities of atheism have been already noticed, it will not be a useless work to set them forth in this place. This general view will bring them into greater relief and give them more prominence.

To be an atheist, in the full sense of the word, viz., deliberately to deny the existence of God, it is necessary to admit only *contingent existences,* which inevitably implies the negation of the principle of causality, one of the most elementary, fundamental and essential axioms of reason (n. 26). It is necessary even to go further, and, rather than admit a cause accounting for the existence of the Universe, to suppress the very idea of a cause, though this would be to contradict one's self at every moment.

(1) Can the atheist even give the causes of his atheism without contradicting himself? (See n. 26.)

(2) Or it is necessary to admit the existence of a *necessary* being and to be constrained, in spite of all evidence to the contrary, to attribute this necessity to matter.

(3) Or to attribute to *chance,* to a *blind* necessity, the marvels of nature, of art, of genius itself!

(4) In another sphere of ideas, it would be necessary to proclaim a *moral law* without lawgiver and without a sanction to enforce its execution; or to deny altogether the very existence of this moral law, and place upon the same footing unselfishness and egotism, fidelity and treason, etc.

(5) To destroy social order, which is impossible without morality, without religion.

(6) To impute falsehood to Christianity, the doctrine which is the glory of humanity and without which men are but mere animals, struggling for existence, according to the theory of Darwin, devouring each other, eating, drinking, enjoying life, and through their excesses, bursting instead of dying. And at the same time to proclaim as true materialism, the most degrading doctrine that is possible to conceive.

(7) To rise up against the testimony of all mankind, especially of the best among them; and this, without being able to put forth a shadow of proof.

Indeed, such is the case, even with the positive Atheists, who deliberately deny the existence of God. Whilst they have failed to refute the arguments sustaining our belief and conviction of this mighty truth, they have been unable

to defend their position against their powerful assailants. They are incapable of either building up or of pulling down. The only thing they can do is to deny, for which it is enough to have a flippant tongue and an obstinate will.

Moreover, though always appealing to science, atheism contradicts the best and the most clearly established results of science (for instance, by affirming the existence of spontaneous generation, n. 26); it goes out of the domain of experience and thereby of science, by proclaiming the eternity, the necessity of matter. It is, therefore, a system utterly anti-scientific, the very denial of science. It is unnecessary to prolong this enumeration of absurdities. Every honest man, open to conviction, must admit them. "There are *difficulties* in admitting that there is a God; but there are *absurdities* in denying His existence," says Voltaire, "Traité de la métaphysique" (Treatise on metaphysics), ch. 2.

39. Of atheists some are theoretical, others practical. Among the former are reckoned those individuals, who, though they recognize God as a Supreme, self-existing Being, the Creator of the Universe, yet attribute to Him what is absolutely repugnant to His infinite perfection such as material, bodily constituents of His nature. They are called atheists, for the God they admit is purely chimerical. Now a chimerical God is no God at all. But such men cannot be designated as atheists in the proper sense of the term, for atheism is the error that concerns not God's essence or nature, but His very existence. To this class belongs the Pantheism of the Jewish Spinoza (1677) and the German philosophers: Fichte (1814); Hegel (1831); Krause (1832); Schelling (1864) and of the pessimistic Schopenhauer (1860).

Practical atheists are those, who, though they do not ignore God, yet so live as if God did not exist and they were not accountable to any superior Being for their moral conduct. All Christian philosophers hold that, in the present order of Providence, in the full light of nineteen centuries of Christian civilization, there can be no atheists by conviction, and that consequently they cannot plead invincible ignorance of God's

existence as Supreme Creator and Sovereign Judge rewarding virtue and punishing wickedness. The strongest difficulties alleged by would-be atheists have been completely refuted by Christian philosophers and theologians, whose works fill the libraries of the most cultured nations of the world in both hemispheres. The language of nature, which all understand, proclaims the existence of its Maker. "Through every star," says Carlyle, "through every blade of grass, God is made visible, if we will but open our minds and eyes." It is to this great fact that the Scriptures refer when they remind us that *"by the greatness of the beauty of the creatures, the Creator of them may be seen so as to be known thereby."* (Wisdom 13, 5.) St. John Chrysostom (398) commenting on that passage exclaims: "The wonderful harmony of all things speaks louder on this subject than the loudest trumpet." If therefore men refuse to recognize God in His works and fail to trace His power and glory in the starry firmament, it is not because they are not clearly manifested there, but because they willfully close their eyes, preferring darkness to light. St. Paul thus speaks of the heathens who deny God: *"The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, His eternal power also and divinity: so that they are inexcusable."* (Rom. 1, 20.) The truth we are here considering distinctly taught by the Sovereign Pontiff Gregory XVI (Denzinger, "Enchiridion," p. 433) has been clearly defined by the Vatican Council (1870) in the following terms: "The same Holy Mother Church holds and teaches that the existence of God, as the principle and end of all things can be known with certainty by the natural light of reason from the contemplation of things created." (Denzinger, "Enchiridion," p. 474.)

The Apostle of the Gentiles, in the quoted letter to the Romans, thus characterizes the guilty pagans: *"Professing themselves wise they become fools."* (Rom. 1, 22.) A very old and highly respected authority, that of the inspired royal prophet, David, thus spoke of the willful, obstinate atheist. *"The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God."* (Ps. 13, 1.)

The late Cardinal Manning thus commented on this text: "It would seem that the text should read: 'The fool hath said in his head, there is no God,' for it is the head that does the thinking. Not so: the Scripture is perfectly correct, for the profession of atheism is not the result of conviction, but is the inevitable consequence of the corruption of the heart." In fact the same royal prophet assigns the chief reason of God's denial by some men saying: *"They are corrupt and are become abominable in their ways."* (Ps. 13, 2.)

Modern Christian apologists are agreed that among the chief moral causes of atheism are reckoned hatred of self-knowledge, shrinking from honest inquiry, and all serious application to study. To the mind of such character the universal consent of past ages, the concurrent weight of both religious and civil authority, the teachings and examples of the noblest geniuses are to go for naught. Superficial culture or a mere smattering of knowledge implies a contempt for all higher things with its unfailing result gross and unrestrained immorality. The clouds of vice will darken the brightest intellect, and blast the most promising career of youth.

Intellectual pride is another baneful cause of unbelief. It is denounced by the poet Pope in the following scathing language:

> "Of all the causes which conspire to blind
> Man's erring judgment and misguide the mind,
> What the weak head with strongest bias rules
> Is Pride, the never failing vice of fools."
>
> *Essay on Criticism,* II.

40. The Rationalist Press Association of London in one of its infidel publications (1911) did not hesitate to print the following assertion: "It is extremely doubtful whether any scientist or philosopher really holds the doctrine of a personal God." This sweeping assumption, unsupported by any proof, was taken up by an English writer, Mr. Arthur H. Tabrum, who in his work "Religious Beliefs of Scientists" (Hunter

and Longhurst, London) completely refutes the charge. Referring to modern English, Scotch and Irish scientists he quotes the very words of more than a hundred men distinguished in every branch of natural Science. To the question addressed to them: "Has it been your experience to find men of Science irreligious and antichristian?", to quote one instance out of many, Sir George G. Stokes, for over fifty years Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University, gave this peremptory answer: "That has not been my experience but the reverse. To confine myself to my own line of mathematical and physical science, and to those who are no longer on earth, though not very many years dead, I know that they were all deeply religious Christian men." To the preceding Scientists who expressed in writing their unqualified dissent from the Rationalists, are to be added the numerous British doctors and professors cited by Mr. Tabrum, men fully committed to the belief in the existence of the Creator. We thus reach the total of three hundred and twenty-five eloquent witnesses to the truth of Theism radically opposed to Rationalism.

American readers are naturally anxious to know the attitude of the leading scientific men of this country towards the fundamental Christian truths firmly believed and ably defended by their fellow-scientists of Great Britain. They will be highly gratified to learn the loyal, conservative Christian stand they uphold in open contradiction to the unwarranted libelous assumption of Joseph McCabe, the notorious apostate friar, the compiler of the Biographical Dictionary of Modern Rationalists. He boldly asserts: "Beyond all question the higher culture of America is rationalistic from New York to California." (Literary Guide, October, 1909.) Before proceeding to the refutation of this calumnious charge, let us see what is the meaning of the term Rationalism as interpreted by the Rationalists themselves. "Rationalism is in direct antagonism with Theism as well as with Christianity. It is a very broad term and includes within its borders Sæcularism, Agnosticism and Freethought." In the judgment then of the renegade friar McCabe, the American scien-

tists, in every state of the Union, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, constitute a formidable host of Rationalists, agnostics, atheists and antichristian freethinkers, a gross accusation far more drastic than that launched against their confrères in the British Isles. But what are the facts? Their own testimony shows that a large proportion, practically a majority of America's cultured men are not only outside the ranks of antichristian Rationalism, but that they are Christian believers, more than two hundred of them being members of some religious denomination. To many of them also was sent the inquiry, "Has it been your experience to find men of Science irreligious and antichristian?" Among the several replies received by the English inquirer, Mr. A. H. Tabrum, the following will suffice as specimens of all the others here omitted to economize space. Dr. William J. Holland, a distinguished naturalist, Chancellor of the Northwestern University of Wisconsin wrote: "I probably have as extensive an acquaintance with the scientific men of all lands, as it falls to the good fortune of most of men to have, and I know that the vast majority of my acquaintances in scientific circles are reverent, devout men, firm believers in the existence of the Power in whom we live, and move and have our being." Professor David Starr Jordan, Chancellor emeritus of Stanford University, California, answered: "It certainly is not my experience to find men of science irreligious or antichristian. A few scientific men doubtless are, but it is with them a matter of temperament, and not of science."

For details and list of names, see "Men of America, a biographical Dictionary of Contemporaries" by J. W. Leonard (Hammerly and Co., New York), and "Religious Beliefs of Scientists" quoted above.

Old Cicero in one of his Orations said: "The man who has once deviated from the truth (*deflexit a veritate*) is usually led to tell without scruple other lies." See "Familiar Quotations from Latin Authors" (London, Routledge and Sons). We regret to be compelled to say that the aphorism of the Roman sage can be applied to Mr. J. McCabe, the compiler of the "Biographical Dictionary of Modern Ration-

alists'' (London, Watts and Co., 1900). A careful inspection of the names there recorded revealed to me the startling fact that as many as thirty distinguished European and American scientists have been reckoned among Rationalists, who, as proved by documentary evidence, either professed Christianity throughout their career, or died converts to Catholic Faith. A further examination of that Dictionary is likely to lead to the discovery of other eminent Christian men labelled by the compiler as Rationalist, atheist, and agnostic to swell the ranks of unbelievers. *''Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis,''* Virgil, Aeneid, II, 521.—No cause can be won with such aid and by such defenders. *''Mala causa patrocinio peior fit.''*—To defend a bad cause is to make it worse.

In examining the pages of the Dictionary in question I looked in vain for any quotation from the authors described therein assigning the reasons of their apostasy from Christianity or of their lifetime adherence to Rationalism. The intelligent reader is not surprised at this negative attitude. Here silence is golden. No apostate, no Rationalist can afford to challenge the criticism of the world by any attempt to justify his rebellion. Here no one can fail to see the striking contrast between the conduct of converts to Catholicism and that of the disciples of Rationalism: for while the former in public lectures and printed volumes set before the world the motives of their conversion, the latter invariably prefer the policy of a cowardly silence.

41. Summary and Conclusion of Chapter I on the Existence of God. The Sovereign legislator of the physical world and of the moral world, the Necessary Being, the first and the ultimate cause of contingent beings that appear and disappear around us, in other words, *God exists.* This is the general conclusion of the foregoing demonstration. Moreover, it is important to remark, the arguments there developed do not point to the existence of three or four different beings. All, by diverse routes, converge upon one centre, the one and the same God. Nothing can be easier than to convince oneself of this (n. 46).

The Supreme Being which mankind proclaims (*Explicit Affirmation,* nn. 8-24) is the Being upon whom and from whom it acknowledges its essential dependence. He is the Sovereign Master of the world, the Supreme Judge, who rewards virtue and punishes crime. He is, therefore, the Author of the moral law (*Implicit Affirmation,* nn. 4-8).

The moral law (the natural law), resulting from the very essence of men and creatures, has for its first Author the Author of nature Himself, that is, the first cause, the necessary Being, whose existence is proven by that of all contingent beings (*Imperfections of the Visible World,* nn. 25-30).

Finally we have seen that He who established such an admirable order of all existing contingent beings, could not be any other than the Author or Creator of those same beings (*Perfections of the Visible World,* nn. 31-38).

Thus, in most diverse ways, we are irresistibly, invincibly brought to the same conclusion: *God exists.*

Deistic philosophy, a reckless press, the flippant pretensions of modern science, all conspire to falsify in the minds of men the true notion or idea of God. Behold here the reason of the urgent necessity in our days of placing that concept in its true light.

CHAPTER II

NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

42. But what is the *nature* of this Being, so *evidently real* and nevertheless so mysterious?

If we were composing a work on *Natural Theology,* viz., on the knowledge of God as attainable by reason, we should here have to set forth at full length the divine essence and attributes as discovered by unaided reason. The limits prescribed for this introduction do not permit us to do so; moreover, this long and laborious study is in nowise necessary.

Our only object was to prepare the way for the treatise on Christian Apologetics.

It is for it to show that between man and the first cause, there exist necessary, immutable relations that constitute *Natural Religion.*

It will then demonstrate *the fact of Supernatural Revelation.*

Then all will be clear. God will come to the help of our weak intelligence. With the full certainty of Faith, we shall know His essence and His attributes. Imperfectly, no doubt. How can we "comprehend," enclose the Infinite in our finite intelligence? But even an imperfect knowledge may be true and certain. Do we know everything about electricity, heat, light? And yet we know those natural agents and forces with full certainty. There is therefore a notable advantage for the truths of God known by natural reason to be proposed to men to be believed on faith, thus facilitating in a great measure the knowledge of God, which is the best instrument or means for attaining holiness and spiritual perfection, as we learn from the angelic Doctor, St. Thomas. (Contra Gent. I, 4.)

It will, therefore, be sufficient for us to recapitulate the principal data of Revelation concerning God: and by adding a few philosophical arguments we will show how perfectly the teachings of divine Faith respond to the demands of reason.

God can be considered under three distinct aspects, namely simply as an existing being, or as an operating being, or as a moral being. Hence the triple division into Quiescent, Operative, and Moral divine attributes. The Quiescent attributes are, unity, immutability, eternity, immensity and infinity. The attributes of Operation are those that imply action either internal or external referred to creatures, such as divine knowledge, will and omnipotence. Among God's Moral attributes are reckoned His wisdom, goodness, holiness, providence, veracity, faithfulness, justice and mercy.

God being one absolutely simple essence all His attributes are perfectly identified with it. This axiom must be borne in mind in our discussion to safeguard the perfect unity and simplicity of the divine substance as defined by the Fourth

Lateran Council (A.D. 1215) and the Vatican Council (A.D. 1870).

43. **1. God Is the Necessary Being.** This perfection concerns the metaphysical essence of God, or that divine attribute, by which the human intellect must principally distinguish Him from all created beings; it is the attribute of absolutely independent self-existence. Hence God is best defined by saying that He is the self-existing, necessary Being, or He who is. God has given to us in Scripture a sublime definition of Himself: "*I am He who Am.—Ego sum qui sum*" (Exod. 3, 14). That is to say: I am the Being surpassing all. It is proper of my essence to exist. I am, and I cannot but be. I am self-existing. *This* was revealing to us the absolute necessity of the divine essence.

But this is precisely what reason has shown us, viz., that a Being *absolutely necessary*, self-existing, could *alone* account for the existence of contingent beings. (See nn. 26–28.)

Hence here again there is perfect accord between reason and Faith.

44. **2. God Is Infinite.** Revelation teaches us that God is an infinite Being; infinite in His essence, infinite in His perfections. Some writers have thought that reason is incapable of proving the divine infinity. This is false. We freely grant that this could not be accomplished except by means of a somewhat deep and subtle argumentation. The human mind would have to descend into the depths of the infinite essence in order to sound them, and weak as it is, would have to discover in those depths the intimate reason of that *infinity*, the most sublime, and therefore, the most difficult of all concepts. But when this infinity is once revealed, what light, what satisfaction for the human intellect!

Reason instinctively felt the necessity of admitting such infinity. It perceived that the cause being proportionate to the effects, the Author of this wonderful Universe must Himself be perfect beyond all conception. It could see, moreover, no reason for setting any limit to the perfections of the first cause. In fact, if God's perfections were finite or limited,

He would have received such limitation either *intrinsically* from Himself, or *extrinsically,* viz., from a cause or being distinct from Himself. But neither supposition can be admitted. First, He cannot have received any limit to His perfections *intrinsically,* namely, from Himself, that is by reason of His essence. For the essence of God, viz., of the Being that is self-existing—*ens a se*—is actually to be. But no simple or pure perfection can be repugnant to such an essence; for all perfection is some being, and therefore quite proper to Him, who is Himself the fullness of being.

Moreover, as God is not the cause of His own existence, neither can He be the cause of His own limitation; for limitation would affect His essence; but His essence is eternal, and consequently eternally identified with His existence. What He is now He has been from all eternity. In the second place, He cannot have received any limits to His perfections *extrinsically,* viz., from a being or cause distinct from Himself, for this would imply a dependence on that being, whilst He is independent of all beings, as He is the first cause of all existing contingent beings. Again, the cause of such limitation should have been eternal, like God's existence. But God alone exists from all eternity.

We are then justified in concluding that God is infinite. However great may be the finite perfection displayed by the Universe (grandeur, power, wisdom, beauty, etc.), human reason, in its dizzy flight, surpassed those limits and conceived the possibility of far superior grandeur, of deeper wisdom and of more charming beauties. Nothing could induce it to believe that the *absolutely necessary Being* could be restricted, or bound by any limit.

Here also Faith gives full satisfaction to reason.

Before proceeding any further, we deem it necessary to call the reader's attention to an important distinction, which sound philosophers are wont to make when treating of the perfections of God. It will enable us to understand clearly in what sense it is said that whatever is perfect in the creature must exist in God, the Creator; and it will show, at the same time, how much this idea of God's perfections, held by

Christian Philosophy, differs from that of the Pantheistic school of both ancient and modern times. (See Hammerstein, S.J., "*The Existence of God,*" p. vii.)

Perfections are of two kinds: first, simple perfections; second, mixed perfections. *Simple* perfections are those which involve no imperfection, *e.g.* wisdom, life. *Mixed* perfections are those which do involve some imperfection, *e.g.* the power of reasoning. The power of reasoning is a perfection inasmuch as it enables us to attain to truth. But it involves imperfection inasmuch as it is by its nature a slow and laborious means of attaining to truth. It is greatly inferior to intuition, which apprehends the truth immediately or without need of the syllogistic process.

Simple perfections we ascribe to God *formally,* that is to say, according to their own proper signification. Thus we ascribe to God life and wisdom in the proper and strict significance of the terms, life and wisdom. We do not, however, ascribe even these perfections to God as they are found in creatures, or as we can conceive them. Wisdom, as we conceive it, is a quality informing a subject, and distinct from the subject it informs. In God, by reason of His infinite simplicity, there can be no *information,* no composition. The creature *has* wisdom. But God *is* wisdom. He identifies His wisdom and His other attributes with Himself. *Simple* perfections, then, we ascribe to God *formally,* or according to their proper signification, but not as they are found in creatures, nor as we can conceive them.

Mixed perfections we ascribe to God, not formally but *eminently.* We cannot ascribe them formally to God, because in their proper signification they involve imperfection. But we do ascribe them *eminently* to God, inasmuch as, instead of any given mixed perfection, we attribute to God some higher perfection, which contains all the perfection of the mixed perfection, without the imperfection which the latter involves. Thus we do not ascribe the power of reasoning to God formally, but we do ascribe it to God *eminently,* inasmuch as we attribute to Him intelligence, or immediate intuition of truth. And this intelligence which we ascribe to God we

identify with Himself, and know Him to be substantial and subsisting intelligence. All this knowledge of God's perfections, together with the knowledge that in God there can be no imperfection, is obtainable by the light of reason.

45. 3. **God Is a Pure Spirit.** *Deus Spiritus est.—God is a spirit.* (John 4, 24.) This is required by His infinite perfection. We have superabundantly proved the radical essential imperfections of matter. We have seen that its pretended necessity was repugnant to reason and common sense; that it could not be the first and sufficient cause of contingent beings (nn. 26-27). Hence the first cause is *essentially immaterial.* It is independent of matter; it is a spirit.

The truth here enunciated is directed against the pantheists and their adherents the monists, who hold that the assemblage of things, which we call the world, is really the one Divine, Absolute Being, under the various aspects, in which it is externally manifested. Hence the Universe and all its component elements are affections or modes of the divine substance and inherent in it. It is the system that confounds God and matter by identifying them. It asserts that in the universality of things there exists only one Being, which is called *Substance* by Spinoza, *the Pure Ego* by Fichte, *the Absolute* by Schelling, *the Logical Concept* by Hegel, all professional pantheists and leaders of their respective schools. It is a tissue of absurdities and contradictions, repugnant alike to reason and all ethical principles.

In fact, it denies human liberty in direct contradiction to the testimony of conscience.

It rejects future life and its retribution asserted by divine authority, prompted by the dictates of reason and confirmed by the universal consent of mankind.

It frees man from all accountability to the Supreme Lawgiver and Judge.

It radically supplants virtue and all heroic deeds, thus nullifying the whole moral order.

What is said of God's essence as a pure Spirit and what will be shown, in Part II, of the spirituality of man's soul evidently militates both against the different schools

of pantheism and materialistic monism soon to be discussed.

The moral argument against pantheism has been briefly stated by a recent writer in the following terms. "What becomes of morality in the pantheistic hypothesis? Is there still room for a distinction between actions really good and really bad? If Pantheism be true, all actions are good. The coward and the hero, the miser and the philanthropist, the tyrant and the martyr, all are deserving of equal praise, for their actions are nothing but a manifestation of the pantheistic God. (Boedder, S.J., "Natural Theology," p. 116.)

A very high authority fully confirms the truth of what has been said. In his allocution of June 9, 1862, Pius IX, *fel. mem.*, condemns pantheism in the following severe terms: "With a perversity only equalled by their folly they venture to assert that the Supreme, all Wise, and all Provident Deity, has no existence apart from the visible Universe: that everything is God, and possesses the very substance of the Divinity. But God and the world then being one and the same thing, there is no difference between spirit and matter, necessity and liberty, truth and falsehood, good and evil, right and wrong. In truth nothing can be imagined more insane, impious and irrational than this teaching."

Among the many aberrations of modern would-be philosophers, which utterly pervert the notion of God as a pure spirit, essentially distinguished from all created beings, must be reckoned the theory of Monism closely allied to pantheism.

We understand by monism (from the Greek μόνος, one), the doctrine which refers the explanation of all the existences, activities and developments of the Universe, including both material and spiritual beings, to one ultimate principle or substance. It is opposed to dualism the generally-admitted distinction between matter and spirit, and to pluralism which admits the existence of the many, practically countless diversified beings that compose the Universe.

The summary argument usually brought to refute monism in all its forms is thus briefly expressed: If all phenomena in the world were mere modifications and appearances of one

single substance, then that same substance would be at once free and necessary, material and spiritual, conscious and unconscious, endowed with intelligence and destitute of it, a series of contradictions and absurdities, which no sane mind can admit.

Monism psychologically considered is rejected on the ground that it obliterates all distinction between body and soul. It is refuted in Part II in the chapter vindicating the spirituality of man's soul. Monism in theology is synonymous with pantheism, which has been confuted above.

As we learn from the Catholic Encyclopedia (X, 486), in the year 1906 the Society of Monists was founded in Germany for the purpose of propagating the doctrine of monism, the notorious Haeckel having been elected its first honorary president. This Society is openly antichristian and makes active warfare against the Catholic Church, the only institution whose traditional, conservative philosophy is successfully holding its ground against the futile monistic and pantheistic attacks. The chief reason of Catholic hostility to monism lies in the fact that this modern fad is vaunted by its advocates as a system of philosophy transcending Christianity, and as the only rational synthesis of science and religion, a boasted claim, which no monist has as yet attempted to justify.

46. **4. God Is Infinite Intelligence.** The admirable order of the world, and especially the existence of intelligent creatures attest the infinite wisdom of God. That the order and the government of the Universe require an infinite wisdom as well as infinite power may be shown by this that the supreme cause ruling over it must know all the possible combinations, untoward complications and disorders that might occur, and should be able either to prevent or counteract them. But an infinite intelligence and an infinite power are required for that purpose. The existence of order in the Universe proves the existence of such intelligence and power. A Pure Spirit, God is intelligence; a Perfect Being, He is infinite intelligence.

Therefore, God knows Himself, He understands Himself. He sees that His essence eminently contains all possible per-

fections (n. 42); that it is, therefore, capable of imitation in different degrees by an indefinite number of contingent beings. These beings He knows distinctly, individually, in an adequate manner, for a *general or indetermined, confused* knowledge would imply an imperfect and restricted intelligence.

The past, the present, the future, all are equally open before Him. He sees all; He knows all. He penetrates into our innermost thoughts, into future free determinations of our will; and this not in a conjectural way, but with a knowledge certain, precise, infallible. It would, indeed, be absurd to suppose that infinite perfection could perfect itself by the acquirement of new knowledge.

47. Here is a difficulty that is frequently urged and must be answered. As the foreknowledge of God is certain, infallible, the event foreseen must *necessarily* occur. If God knows that Peter will deny his Master, it is impossible for Peter not to deny Him. What then becomes of human liberty? This is a captious objection which it is important to refute. (1) *The liberty of man is a certain indubitable fact.* We shall prove it (nn. 65–83). Each one of us carries in the innermost feeling of his heart the firm conviction of this truth. I am as certain of writing at this moment, as I am certain that I am writing *freely*. This liberty is universally proclaimed by the human race when it speaks of virtue and vice, responsibility, merit, reward and punishment. Sound philosophy demonstrates this in the clearest manner.

(2) *The infinite knowledge of God is a second fact no less certain.* Hence, supposing that we *could see* no means of reconciling these two facts, simple common sense would oblige us to conclude that this means does exist, *no matter what may be* our ignorance. It is absurd to deny a fact which is certain only because we happen to be ignorant of its *wherefore*. As the distinguished statesman, Joseph de Maistre, wisely remarks (Soirées de St. Pétersbourg, I, p. 256): "When a truth of the natural order, or a dogma, or article of divine revelation is thoroughly demonstrated, no objection, however forcible, can disprove it. For so long as the arguments, on which the

demonstration is based, are not refuted, the truth remains untouched, and all the difficulties raised against it, if they cannot be completely answered, will simply prove the incapacity of our mind, but they cannot convince us of the error of the doctrine or truth concerned." If this observation is attended to, it will at once appear that the following truths and doctrines have nothing to fear from the apparently insoluble objections raised against them:

1. The Foreknowledge of God and the Liberty of Man.
2. The Existence of Physical and Moral Evil.

As to the truth or fact that God's foreknowledge does not, by any means, interfere with our liberty, let us reflect for a moment. I am now writing; no necessity compels me. But now that I am writing *it is impossible that at the same time* I should not be in the act of writing. For it is impossible that the same thing, fact or event should be and not be at the same time. Hence it is true to say now: "On such a day, on such an hour, X is writing." But yesterday it would have been true to say: "To-morrow at such an hour, X will be in the act of writing." Now if any one had foreseen or *conjectured* this fact, would his conjecture have interfered with my liberty? Evidently not. And if his knowledge had been certain in place of being merely *conjectural?* Would it have interfered with my liberty? Surely not. Be it certain or conjectural, it is a matter *of perfection* or *imperfection* for the intelligence that *knows.* My liberty is in nowise trammelled or tampered with, for *I write not because this particular fact of writing is known to some one,* but, on the contrary, it is known *from the fact that I am actually writing.* Hence it is not the knowledge of God that renders my action *necessary;* but without my act, the knowledge of God would not have thus foreseen. As this free act of mine would sometimes be true, because actually done, it could not escape the omniscience of God, to whom is open the present as well as the future and the past. If any one should insist further and ask *how* could God foresee this *free* future decision of mine; there is only one answer to be given: I do not know. What is then to astonish us that we cannot sound the depths of

infinite intelligence? . . . Would that be a reason for denying either prescience, or liberty, two indubitable facts? Would not a man be considered insane if he were to deny the existence of the telephone, because he did not know how the spoken words are transmitted? (See nn. 144–147.)

48. A few additional remarks on this popular objection will not be out of place. It is sometimes expressed in the following syllogistic form. What God foresees must *infallibly* happen; God foresees all human actions; therefore, they are *necessary, inevitable.* Some silly philosophers, unable to extricate themselves from this apparently conclusive reasoning, have denied liberty to man, and others did not hesitate to deny prescience or foreknowledge to God. But an elementary acquaintance with the principles of logic suffices to detect the sophism contained in the aforementioned syllogism. The author of that objection, Damiron (Psych., vol. II, p. 75), confounds two notions that are essentially distinct, viz., infallibility and necessity, of which the former belongs to the observer, in our case to the certain foreknowledge of God; the latter concerns the agent, in our case, the intelligent creature. What God foresees will *infallibly* happen, because His foreknowledge cannot be deceived; but it does not follow that the things foreseen will happen *necessarily,* when it is a question of actions depending on the free deliberation of man. In other words, things do not happen because God foresees them; but He foresees them because they will happen, either *necessarily* or *freely,* according as the agents are destitute of liberty or are endowed with it.

This is exactly the solution given by some of the greatest thinkers to the objection of the infidels, who claimed that God's foreknowledge tampers with man's liberty. Origen (A. D. 254): "Things do not happen because God foresees them in the distant future; but because they will happen, God knows them before they happen." St. John Chrysostom (A. D. 407): "We must not think that because scandals have been foreseen by God's foreknowledge, therefore they will occur; but because they will, in the course of time, occur, He foresaw them; and if they were not to occur, neither would

He have foreseen and foretold them." St. Jerome (A. D. 420): "Not because God knows that something will happen, it must therefore happen; but God, knowing the future, foresees it, because it is to happen." St. John Damascene (A. D. 754): "The foreknowing power of God does not certainly come from us; but if He foresees this or that act, which we shall freely perform, this is owing to ourselves, the free authors of such actions." (Urráburu, S.J., "Theodicea," P. II, p. 213; Boedder, "Natural Theology," p. 272.)

49. **5. God Is Infinite Goodness.** (1) Goodness is synonymous with perfection; thus God is good in Himself, fully, totally good without mingling of evil.

(2) God is the source of all good; from Him come all the goods which charm and delight us. His goodness is infinite, His liberality inexhaustible. It is God that enlightens us in the sun; that cheers us with its genial warmth, and delights us with the varied beauties of field and forest. His goodness is shown in the endless stores of teeming earth. His hand paints the petals of the flowers, shapes their tiny leaves, and fills their cups with honeyed fragrances. And what are we in soul and body, but living monuments to attest the goodness of God? Our souls are His gifts; they live and act, they know and feel through Him. Our eyes see with His sight; our tongues speak with his motion; our hands labor, and our feet walk with His power, for in "*Him we live, and we move and we are.*" (Acts 17, 28.)

(3) In all his works God has for motive the *communication of His bounty.* He desires the good of His creatures, especially of His rational creatures. To suppose the contrary would be to deny the infinite perfection of the Divine Being. In fact, what induced God to create? Not to secure any good of which He stood in need, for an infinitely perfect and happy being was not in want of any temporal good external to Himself. The only reason or motive was His own infinite goodness, that is the wish to make His creatures partakers of His own happiness in the measure possible to finite beings. It is plain that only rational creatures, Angels and men, can be conscious sharers of such happiness, and realize,

in some manner, the unrivalled sublimity of such disinterested motive on the part of the Creator. As we learn from the Gospel, every just soul, as it reaches the threshold of Paradise, is welcomed by its Maker by the cheering salutation, "*Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of the Lord.*" (Matt. 25, 21.)

How we would wish to set forth here the mysteries of love of the supernatural life, of the beatific vision, of redemption, and the Holy Eucharist! Here again, a difficulty arises: How can we reconcile the goodness of God with the too evident deluge of evils that afflict humanity? How can we resolve the *problem of evil?*

50. The Goodness of God and the Problem of Evil. In the first place we must make a distinction between physical evil and moral evil. Moral evil can affect only *free will.* It may be defined: "Disagreement between the free act and that which is required by the nature of the will, viz., the pursuit of what is right and good." It is easy to show that moral evil is nothing else but *sin,* or the violation of the divine law.

Physical evil is a disagreement between the condition or actual state of a being and the requirements of its nature, for instance, pain, sickness, etc. In other words, physical evil is the lack in a being of something becoming the nature of that being, *e.g.,* blindness, deafness, insanity, etc.

This being settled, let us show that God can (1) *cause,* though *indirectly, physical* evil, and (2) *permit moral evil.*

51. *God may indirectly cause physical evil.* Evidently it is repugnant to our ideas to think that God wishes evil for the sake of evil, that He causes it through malevolence or want of reflection. But (*a*) is it not evident that, at times, a *superior* good may presuppose the loss of an *inferior* good? Thus, for the benefit of an animal, a plant may be destroyed; a painful operation may be performed to save a man's life.

(*b*) The *general* good is often secured only by the sacrifice of certain particular goods. The defense of one's country is achieved at the price of the blood of its bravest citizens.

(*c*) Every violation of justice requires reparation. In this way punishment (a physical evil) becomes a true benefit.

Now, what God seeks, in His infinite bounty, His infinite wisdom, is the *general* good, the *superior* good, the *universal* order. Undoubtedly we do not always see the wherefore of this or that physical evil. But should we wonder at this, that our reason, like the human eye, whose range of vision is limited, should not be able to see beyond its narrow horizon, and encompass the full extent of the divine counsels?

No doubt, also, the world is not absolutely perfect; it is not as perfect as it might be. This absolute perfection in contingent beings would be mere nonsense, an absurdity.

But such as it is, the world—Faith and reason prove it—is ruled by a Being infinitely perfect, therefore, infinitely good, Who does not wish evil directly, but indirectly in view of a superior good.

52. Physical evil, as we have seen, is all that interferes with our physical, material well-being, such as poverty, destitution, hunger, thirst, hard and painful labor, loss of friends, of property, bodily harm, sickness, old age, and, of course, death. In the first place, it is plain that a great number of such evils are the result of man's imprudence, foolhardiness, rashness and reckless daring. Is Almighty God to be held responsible for calamities, which men could easily have avoided by the right use of the faculties they received from Him for their guidance? But some one might say, what about the accidents, dire calamities, which are exclusively due to the forces of nature, such as earthquakes, cyclones, volcanic eruptions, inundations and the like? Could not Almighty God prevent them? We answer, if we consider God's omnipotence in itself, it is plain that it is entirely within His power to control all the forces of nature, which essentially depend on Him, both for their existence and their activity. But it must be carefully considered first, that God is by no means bound to do all that is possible to Him; and secondly, that the exercise or use of any one of His attributes is always regulated by the exigencies of the others, for God can never contradict Himself. Hence His omnipotence will never do what is not in

harmony with His wisdom, His justice, His goodness or any other of His infinite perfections. Now, in the present case, He would not be acting in conformity with His wisdom, if He were to interfere at every moment with the ordinary course of nature to prevent all the effects that might prove disastrous to men. Moreover, it is evident that men could in many cases avoid the consequences of these disasters by their foresight, or by heeding the warnings of competent counselors. An instance in point is found in the terrible disaster that some years ago befell the population of Saint Pierre in the Island of Martinique. For the timely warning of the imminent danger given by competent scientists was rashly disregarded by the civil authorities, which became, in some measure, responsible for the fearful loss of life. Can any one blame God's providence for that awful calamity? Do not men know, both from science and experience, the results of volcanic eruptions? (n. 50). And to speak of our present time and of our own country, who is chiefly to blame for the awful toll of human lives ushered into eternity in automobile accidents? Are they not the reckless speeders, the intoxicated, the inexperienced drivers, and the foolhardy who attempt to beat the train at the grade crossings? The authentic statistics of the many unfortunate victims are staggering in an extreme degree, the result, in most cases, of open defiance to the traffic laws of the land.

53. Rising now to a higher plane, no sincere Christian believer can fail to realize the fearful truth that the most dreadful consequence of sudden, unprovided death incidental to natural disasters, is to fall into the hands of the living God in the state of mortal sin, and thus incur the eternal punishment reserved to impenitent sinners in the next world. This is quite true. But here again, no reasonable man can accuse God of injustice, if the sinner is suddenly ushered into eternity. Did he not know the consequence of a death in sin? Did he not receive from God's goodness and mercy ample time for securing pardon, viz., the many years spent in sin?

But, on the other hand, are there not many calamities, accidents, from which men have been miraculously delivered,

and the greatest number of which shall be known to us only in the next life? Are not these a clear manifestation of God's goodness and of His providential care toward His rational creatures? We admit that, in the course of events, there may arise particular instances, which we find it difficult to reconcile with our notions of God's perfect goodness and infinite love. But does this difficulty justify us in arraigning God's dealings before our fallible tribunal, and in doubting or even denying His goodness? Shall we make the limited powers of our puny intellect the supreme measure of all right and wrong, of all good and evil? Our knowledge of God's goodness, as gathered from reason and fully confirmed by divine revelation, more than warrants our trusting Him, even when appearances are dead against Him. As St. Gregory Nazianzen (d. 390), in his seventeenth Oration, wisely remarks: "Under God's government there are many things, which we cannot understand, and which are to us like a dark enigma; this happens either because the Lord wishes to rebuke our arrogance by restricting our knowledge within narrow bounds, or because He intends to raise our minds to things eternal." In conclusion, God's will cannot wish any evil as such, but it can wish the evil of pain or punishment, and natural defects, not in themselves, but by reason of some good annexed to them and willed by His supernatural providence, frequently as a chastisement of sin, and a warning to the transgressors of God's holy laws. But as to the evil of guilt, or moral evil, the divine will can in no wise wish it, but only permits it.

In this connection it is well to recall to our memory the words of our Blessed Savior in St. Luke's Gospel (13, 4-5):

"Or those eighteen upon whom the tower fell in Siloe, and slew them; think you that they also were debtors (sinners) *above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? No, I say to you; but except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish";* viz., you will incur the same endless penalty which befell those that were overtaken by a sudden death in the state of grievous sin.

(2) *God may permit moral evil.* He could never *cause* it

directly or indirectly. It would be absurd to say that God was the cause of sin, of the violation of His own law.

But *causing* is far different from merely *permitting* moral evil. What does this permission presuppose? Two things: (*a*) that God gives to man free will, which implies the possibility of sinning; (*b*) that He does *not always prevent* the abuse of liberty or the act of sin. Now God can do both things without running counter to the exigencies of His attributes, such as wisdom and goodness.

(*a*) Free will is a benefit, a great good, a perfection of rational nature. No doubt it is a double-edged weapon, but we have reason to teach us how to use it. And above all, free will is the *only means of gaining merit,* to secure our happiness through our own free acts. It is for us to make good use of liberty, and a day will come when it shall be our fortune to possess a blessed, a fortunate incapacity of sinning. Sin, the abuse of liberty, cannot evidently come from God. God severely condemns it. On one hand He threatens an eternal punishment to the transgressors of His commands, and promises on the other ineffable rewards to the faithful observers of the divine law.

(*b*) God is not bound to prevent the abuse of liberty. Nothing obliges Him to do it. If He were in any way the cause of sin, He would be unjust in punishing it. But sin being committed solely and exclusively through the fault of man, by the abuse of his freedom, nothing prevents God from making sin itself serve for the manifestation of His glory—the principal and last end of creation. This end He will infallibly obtain, both by exercising His justice and by exhibiting His infinite mercy (n. 270), and this in such a way that the good thus obtained will surpass in an incomparable degree the evil tolerated. (See De San, "De Deo Uno," p. 591.)

54. Neither does God's concurrence in the free actions of human creatures render Him responsible for the existence of moral evil, or the commission of sin. For as St. Thomas (I, II, q. 9, a. 6) lucidly explains: "God, as universal moving agent, moves the will of man to what is its universal object, viz., good; and without this first motion or tendency man

could not act. But it is man himself that determines or directs his will to embrace this or that particular object, which may be either a real, or only an apparent good." The *real good* is what is conformable to the law of God, which is the supreme, infallible rule of man's actions, and constitutes a virtuous, honest action, worthy of supernatural reward, if accompanied by other requisite dispositions. The *apparent good* is something contrary to that law, and is consequently a dishonest, vicious, sinful action, deserving a proportionate punishment. And as the choice of any particular, apparent, sinful object comes exclusively from the willful and untrammelled determination of man, it would be absurd to attribute the sinfulness of such an action to the action of God. A familiar illustration will set forth this truth in a yet clearer light:

A sailing vessel is crossing the ocean, impelled by the force of the wind, but it is the pilot that directs its course, and directs it to this or that harbor according to his will. And if the carelessness or rashness of the pilot were to direct the vessel so as to have it dash into a rock, will anyone blame the force of the wind for the disaster? Certainly not. The application is easy enough. What the force of the wind is to the sailing vessel, God's action or impulse is regarding the will of man, on whom alone rests the responsibility of directing that action or tendency to what is only an apparent good, viz., to sinful objects, because contrary to the divine law.

As Fr. Boedder pertinently remarks (Natural Theology, p. 393): "Absolutely speaking, this difficulty against the moral attributes of God, such as holiness, goodness, justice, drawn from the divine permission of moral evil, or sin, is sufficiently solved by an appeal to the arguments by which we have proved to demonstration the existence of one personal, infinitely perfect, and infinitely wise God. These arguments rest on solid grounds, and are wholly conformable to the dictates of sound reason. Hence the opponents of the doctrine proved will accomplish nothing with all their objections so long as they will not be able to dislodge us from our position by showing that our argumentation is faulty and

unsound. No opposition, however cunningly devised and plausibly presented, can overthrow our evident conclusions."

55. As among the problems that come before us from time to time is that of the existence of evil apparently irreconcilable with the attribute of God's infinite goodness, additional considerations will assist the reader in forming sound Catholic ideas on this vexed subject, and in safeguarding him against false theories, highly detrimental to his faith. Both the dictates of reason and the teachings of Revelation are the principal means furnished to man by divine Providence to prove that the presence of evil of whatsoever kind is in full harmony with God's attributes, and conducive to the universal good of creatures, particularly of such as may apply to themselves the words of St. Paul. *"We know that to them, that love God, all things work together unto good."* (Rom. 8, 28.) When reason itself supplies us with unanswerable proofs of God's infinite goodness, it is absurd to set aside all these proofs because we may be confronted with a difficulty, which our limited intelligence is unable fully to explain. Could we see the whole of God's plan, and the ultimate results of His providential dispositions, all difficulties would vanish, just as the rising sun dispels the clouds of the lowering sky. So soon as we realize that the present momentary existence is but a preparation for another eternal and a most happy one, and that the whole purpose of God's dealings with His rational creatures is to fit them for that other immensely better life, all our difficulties lose their force, and what is called evil is found, in sober truth, to be but evil in disguise, and, in reality, a substantial good.

Moreover, no one can deny that spiritual, ever-enduring goods are as superior to purely material and temporal goods as Heaven is above earth, and eternity is above time; therefore we need not be surprised if the Lord should, at times, strip His creatures of the latter in order to secure to men the attainment of the former. On this account it is the acme of conceit for ignorance to attempt to sit in judgment on the dispositions of Infinite Wisdom, and to arraign Supreme In-

telligence before the tribunal of fallible man. Free will, as noted above, is a necessary condition for the existence of even the least degree of virtue and consequent merit, as well as for the least degree of sin and resulting demerit. When set face to face with the prevalence of sin in its most hideous forms we need not be at all disconcerted, for evidently all responsibility rests with man, not with God, who hates it and forbids it under the severest penalties. The Lord gives man free will, and in so doing confers on him an inestimable privilege, whereby he is lifted high above the brute creation and enabled to mould and work out his own destiny and gain the inconceivable happiness of life eternal. But to have the power of choosing the good is to have the correlative faculty of choosing what is evil. Sin, however, is so essentially an act of free will that man cannot be compelled to it by any tempter either human or diabolical. It has been well said that nothing in the vast universe resembles or approaches more closely the omnipotence of God than the untrammelled liberty of man. Whoever is foolish enough to blame Almighty God for bestowing on His rational creatures the gift of freedom, would deliberately rob the citizens of Heaven of one of their greatest accidental joys, the consciousness of glorious victory and of well-merited reward. To such additional heavenly happiness are, no doubt, referred the following words of Holy Scripture: *"He that could have transgressed, and hath not transgressed: and could do evil things and hath not done them: who hath been tried thereby and made perfect, he shall have glory everlasting."* (Ecclus. 31, 10.) If wicked men were not permitted to abuse their free will and follow their iniquitous career, there would then be no persecution, no tyrants, no bloodthirsty rulers to imprison, torment and put to death the holy ones of God. The martyrs, now the brightest among the blessed, would be unknown, and heroism and sterling virtue, so honorable to mankind, would have no existence.

Our conclusion then is that God permits moral evil for the several weighty reasons alleged above, and because He is so wise as to draw good out of evil, and through its agency

to add immeasurably to His own glory and to the everlasting beatitude of the saints. (Irish Ecclesiastical Record, 1899.)

56. **6. God Is One,** viz., there is but one God. The unity, or unicity, or oneness of God is a truth of reason, which clever minds, such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and others, acknowledged, notwithstanding the thick clouds of Paganism that were liable to obscure their intellects. After all, is it not a fact that such attribute of the Deity can be easily perceived?

One supreme, necessary being is amply sufficient to account for the existence of all contingent beings. We have reason to demand some positive proofs before admitting a plurality of Gods. Moreover, do not the marvelous unity displayed by the Universe, and all the beings contained in it point out to the existence of one only Author and Ruler of all things? Here also Faith joins hands with reason, and shows the perfect harmony between rational science and revealed truth.

I believe in one God—*Credo in unum Deum*—such is the first article of the Christian symbol. Unity, or more properly, unicity or oneness, is a necessary property or attribute of the Supreme Being. Should there be many Gods, they would naturally be distinguished from one another by something proper to each one of them. Now this *something*, or characteristic note found in any one of them, must naturally be *wanting* to all the others, which fact would prove that none of them is the infinitely perfect being, such as we proved above (n. 44) the first cause of contingent beings should be.

The thesis "God is one in nature or essence" is opposed both to Polytheism, the absurd doctrine of the plurality of Gods, and to Manicheism, the equally absurd doctrine upholding the existence of two necessary, self-existing Beings, one supremely good and the author of all good, the other supremely evil and the cause of all evil. The attribute of God's unity logically and necessarily follows from that of His infinity. For if God is not one in essence, then we must admit the existence of at least another God, His equal. But in this case neither of them could be infinite, for I may very well conceive a third Being, so perfect as to have no equal, and to

contain in himself the perfections of the other two. A considerable strength will be added to this argument if we reflect that the highest perfection we can attribute to any being is to say that it has no equal. The idea we have of God is that of a Supreme Being, the Sovereign, independent Creator and Ruler of the Universe, a Being so perfect in all its attributes as to infinitely surpass all other beings, either actually existing or possible. Now such a being can evidently have no equal. God, therefore, is one in essence, nature and existence. Lastly, we may reason thus: Let us suppose, for argument's sake, that there exists more than one God, all perfectly equal. When the world was created, either they agreed together as to the order to be established, or they did not. If there was no agreement, there would be no order, but great confusion, for each one, acting freely and independently of the other, might have established contradictory laws governing the phenomena of the created world. But as proved above (nn. 32-33), instead of chaos and confusion, an admirable order prevails throughout the Universe; we must then admit the first alternative, that namely they all agreed in the appointing of the present laws and order that rule the world. But is this admission compatible with those essential attributes of the Deity, which reason demonstrates, such as freedom, infinity and independent action? By no means. For if they consented to agree and act harmoniously together, none of them would be independent in its action, and, what is worse, and highly derogatory to their perfection, they would all be necessarily compelled to surrender to one another their freedom and independence in order to avoid confusion in the phenomena of the created universe. Once more, then, reason and common sense lead us to admit the unity of God, and confirm the divinely revealed dogma asserting that attribute to Him.

Here we must attentively observe that the mystery of Holy Trinity, taught by Christian Faith, is by no means in opposition to the truth of the unity of God as manifested by the light of reason. This point is fully explained in the third Part of "Christian Apologetics" (nn. 146–147), to which the reader is referred.

57. **7. God Is Immense.** God is present everywhere, not only by His *power* (as the prince in his kingdom), not only by His *knowledge* (as the spectator is present at the drama acted under his eyes), but also by His *essence.* How circumscribe within a limited space the infinite essence? God, therefore, is *immense* in the full acceptance of the word.

To prevent misconception it is important to remember that there are three ways or manners, in which different beings may be in a given place.

(*a*) *By circumscription,* or circumscriptively, if the being be material, therefore extended and divisible into parts, corresponding to the parts of the surfaces surrounding it. Only material substances can exist in place or space circumscriptively. They are said to be *formally* extended.

(*b*) By *limitation,* or definitely, if its presence be limited to a certain part of space and its whole substance be everywhere within the bounds of that part of space. This is proper of all contingent and therefore finite, simple, spiritual substances. Thus the human soul exists *definitely* in the body, because its presence is conterminous with the body in such a way that its whole substance exists whole in the whole body and whole in every part of it, and is found nowhere outside of the body. Such substances are said to be *virtually* extended, inasmuch as they manifest, wherever they are, their presence by their different operations and effects.

(*c*) By *omnipresence,* or *immensity*—in Latin *repletive*—when a being is not limited by any space, but is whole and entire in all places and in every part of a place. This mode of existence is exclusively proper of God, who is, on that account, said to be omnipresent, or immense. God, then, is present, not by circumscription, because being a pure spirit, He has no parts corresponding to the parts of space—not by limitation, because there is no space or place, real or possible, where He does not or could not exist in His entirety. He is, therefore, everywhere, in virtue of His immensity, by His essence, presence and power.

58. **8. God Is Immutable.** A Being absolutely necessary, God could not have come out of nothingness; He cannot enter

into it; a Being infinitely perfect, He cannot gain or lose a perfection; He is, therefore, *physically* immutable. All changes in the Will suppose inconstancy, ignorance or improvidence, lack of foresight; imperfections which are inadmissible in a Being infinitely perfect. God, therefore, is *morally* immutable. *Physical* immutability is, therefore, the absence of all change in the nature or accidents of a being; *moral* immutability is the absence of all change in the *will.*

As Holy Scripture testifies in the words of God Himself *"I am the Lord and I change not"* (Malachy 3, 6), there can be no intrinsic change in God, but there may be extrinsic changes in the relations between God and contingent beings, between the Creator and His creatures. Here it is objected: If God performs some external act, for instance, creating the World, does He not by such an act pass from the state of non-Creator to that of actual Creator? And does He not by this operation undergo a change? We answer: It is not true that the attribute of Creator has been added to the being of God, and that the fact of Creation has produced any intrinsic change in Him. He possessed the power of creating from all eternity. He executed it in definite time, but no change occurred in the Creator's mind. The truth is that by creation God has produced things outside Himself, and from this production, which left His essence absolutely immutable, God is extrinsically denominated the Creator.

59. **9. God Is Eternal.** It is manifestly evident that the *absolutely necessary* Being could not have a beginning nor an end. God, therefore, is *eternal.* On the other hand, being necessary, He is equally immutable. Nothing that exists in Him ever had a beginning or will ever have an end. There is no succession in His being; no past, no future; only an immovable present. Strictly speaking, therefore, it cannot be said of Him: God *was;* God *will be,* but only God *is* (n. 41).

The wisdom of the ancients had already proclaimed this truth by the mouth of Plato (Timeus, 38): "He *was,* He *will be,* designate properties which belong to time, and which we unconsciously transfer to the eternal Being (to the Deity) erroneously. For we say He was, He is and He will be, when

in reality it is only true to say He *is*. The expressions, to have been or must be, these ways of speaking belong to a being that had its origin in time, because they indicate motion, movement. But the Being eternally immutable remains without variation of age throughout the duration of its existence. In Him, there is no past, no future, nothing which affects sensible things, from the fact that they have had a beginning." Hence God's eternity has been admirably defined by Boethius (A. D. 470 or 525): *Interminabilis vitæ tota simul et perfecta possessio.* Eternity is a simultaneously full and perfect possession of life without beginning and without end.

To assert that it cannot be said of God that *He was,* is true only in the sense of thereby attributing to Him an existence that had a beginning, and may have an end, what is proper only of creatures. Hence God's eternity is most clearly and accurately expressed in the following language of divine Revelation: *"John to the seven churches, which are in Asia: Grace be unto you and peace from Him, who is, and who was and who is to come."* (Apoc. 1, 4.)

A comparison may aid us in conceiving this divine prerogative undoubtedly mysterious. Every necessary axiom, maxim or metaphysical principle, is, in a way, actually eternal. For instance, a thing cannot be and not be at the same time. For it cannot be said that this axiom *was* true, or that it *will be* true; but we must say that it *is* true. So it is with God. In Him there is neither past nor future, but only an eternal present. As Boethius, cited above, expresses it: *"Nunc fluens facit tempus; nunc stans facit æternitatem."* The *passing now* makes time; the *standing now* makes eternity.

60. **10. God Is All-powerful.** This is also an immediate consequence of His infinity. The power of the infinitely perfect being has no other limit than the contradictory, the absurd.

For what is repugnant, contrary to the very essence of things, is self-contradictory, as it implies the existence of objects or ideas, whose intrinsic notes destroy one another, and which are consequently destitute of all reality, such as a square circle, a quadrilateral triangle, etc. When we speak of

such matters as are intrinsically impossible, as St. Thomas wisely observes, we ought not to say that God *cannot do* them, but rather that they *cannot be done,* because their intrinsic repugnance places them beyond the sphere of both metaphysical and physical possibility, and consequently of divine omnipotence. For what is absurd and contradictory has no reality, and practically ends in nothing, whilst the term or result of an action always implies something capable of existing, and consequently real, or at least possible. When it is argued that God cannot be said to be omnipotent, because, He cannot commit sin, we answer as follows:

In the first place, the essence of sin does not consist in the production of a given effect, but rather in the opposition of the free will of the creature to the eternal law of God, the Creator. Hence the same identical act may be sinful or not, according to circumstances. Now, it is plain that the *will* of God cannot be opposed to the *law* of God, because that law considered under its subjective aspect, is really identical with the act of the divine will. Hence the expressions *divine will* and *divine law* are practically equivalent, as they mean one and the same thing. Therefore, the proposition, God can sin, is intrinsically contradictory, and as such implies something absolutely impossible. Moreover, to sin instead of exhibiting evidence of power, proves rather the absence of it, as it is the result or effect of weakness, which cannot be attributed to an infinitely perfect being. (See Part VII, p. 209.)

In treating of God's omnipotence it is highly important to bear in mind the following distinction quite available for the solution of difficulties against that divine attribute. According to the doctrine of the Schoolmen there is in God both Absolute and Regulated omnipotence, *potentia absoluta et potentia ordinata.* We attribute to God absolute omnipotence, when we assert that He can do all things at all possible, namely not involving any repugnance or contradiction. Thus God, though omnipotent, cannot create an infinitely perfect being, for such an act implies a contradiction, as a created being, by the very fact that it is a creature, and therefore necessarily dependent on its Maker, cannot be infinitely per-

fect, since infinity is an attribute exclusively proper of a self-existing, independent being such as God is. The Regulated or orderly omnipotence embraces all the possible things which God, according to the eternal decrees of His wisdom, justice, foreknowledge and providence has determined to do at some future time. For example, even in the present order of fallen man, God can, by His absolute power, preserve any individual from death: but He will not actually do so by His orderly or Regulated omnipotence, because He has decreed otherwise, and such preservation or exception would consequently be contrary to the general sentence of death pronounced against our first parents and all their descendants.

This omnipotence God has especially manifested by *creating,* that is, making the heavens and the earth out of nothing. Creation is the production of a substantial being without the aid of pre-existing material. To bridge over the abyss between nothing and existence is an operation so proper to God alone that it is absolutely incommunicable to any creature. On this point all Christian philosophers are agreed. The phrase—God created the world out of nothing—is employed to exclude the necessity of pre-existing matter for the creative act: and it is only by the ignorant or the willful perversion of its meaning that the term "nothing" is taken as the starting point and origin of being. In the words of St. Thomas (I, q. 45): "When we say that something is made of nothing, that in creation nothing is prerequisite, we mean to deny the existence of any material cause." Here the holy Doctor evidently uses the term cause in its metaphysical sense, as one of the five kinds of causes explained in ontology, namely the efficient, the formal, the exemplary, the final and the material cause, that is the matter out of which the thing is made. Thus steel is the material cause of a watch spring. Hence the saying of the Epicureans: "From nothing nothing comes," which some pretending modern philosophers so confidently quote against the doctrine of creation, is a sheer sophism, which any tyro in logic can expose and refute.

Three suppositions are proposed to account for the origin of the world: (1) It is either an emanation from

God; (2) or it has been made from pre-existing material; (3) or it was brought into existence by creation. The first supposition is rank Pantheism refuted above. The second supposition perverts the meaning of creation, which excludes all pre-existing material, and implies moreover the absurdity of an infinite series of contingent beings. Now as each of them is destitute of the power of creation proper to God alone, their multitude, even indefinitely multiplied, can no more achieve the feat of creation than an assemblage of countless blind men can produce the power of vision. The first and the second hypothesis being excluded, there remains only the third, Creation, as the only rational explanation of the existence of all contingent beings.

A similar argument has been couched as follows: To account for the undeniable fact of the existing Universe three suppositions have been propounded: (1) that the World has made itself; (2) that the World has not been made because self-existing; (3) that an external Power, God, has made the World. *First supposition:* The World made itself. Though, as Cicero said, there is no absurdity, which has not been taught by some philosopher, yet we can hardly believe that any one would hold that the world has been its own Creator. The mere statement of such a thing is enough to condemn it. To create is to perform an act; but before any being can act, it must already be in existence. It is unthinkable that a power should act before it exists. We then summarily dismiss the first hypothesis and conclude that the world could not have made itself. *Second supposition:* The world has not been made because self-existing. It has been shown above (nn. 42-50) that a self-existing Being must be infinite, perfect, immutable and endowed with free activity and self determination. Are such attributes possessed by the material universe? Certainly not; for we detect in it the very opposite characters. It is finite, bristling with many imperfections, changeable, inert and absolutely incapable of any self-determination. It has therefore been proved that the world cannot be said to be self-existing. Having rejected the two preceding suppositions as untenable we are logically led to conclude that it is alto-

gether impossible to account for the existence of the World without admitting the action of an omnipotent power.

61. **11. God Is the Chief and Last End of All Things.** (1) *In all His works God has a purpose in view.* To imagine that God had created the world without reason and without purpose, and that He abandoned it to the caprices of chance, would be to attribute the grossest of imperfections to Infinite Intelligence, Infinite Bounty. To act without a preconceived design, without a consistent order, is to act like one insane. Therefore, *God in creating had in view an end worthy of Himself;* and this end He *wishes efficaciously.* This first point is perfectly evident.

(2) *This end could not be other than God Himself.* Now what is the end, this purpose worthy of God? Would it be a being distinct from Himself? Impossible. Everything that exists outside of God comes from God, receives *all* from God, its existence, its essence, its perfection. Without God it would be pure nothingness; nay, it would not even be possible. Hence, it follows by a rigorous consequence, that *in reality no creature is amiable for itself, through itself.* That limited reason should not always perceive this essential dependence, that a contingent will should love a creature for itself, this alas! is only too possible. But such an inconsequent aberration would be absurd on the part of the Infinitely Perfect Being. Therefore, God cannot love any creature for itself. *He cannot, therefore, propose to Himself any other end than Himself.* An unreflecting mind might assimilate this divine intention with *egoism.* To reject such idea one has only to recall that egoism is a *disorder.* The egotist refers to himself *what does not belong to him.* There is no disorder in wishing that which the essence of things requires. Moreover, the good of every creature, especially of a rational creature, is his subordination to God. What reason teaches, divine revelation confirms; hence we read in holy Scripture, *"The Lord hath made all things for Himself."* (Prov. 16, 4.) *"And everyone that calleth upon My name, I have created him for My glory; I have formed him and made him."* (Isaias, 43, 7.)

(3) *This end is the glory of God.* But how can God refer

all creation to Himself? Can He receive therefrom an increase of joy, of beatitude? No evidently: He is fully, *infinitely* happy. The only good that He could have had in view was the manifestation of His glory. In this way:

The creature, as we have seen, receives from God *its whole being;* it is the work of the divine wisdom and bounty; according to the measure of its perfection, it reflects the power, the grandeur, the beauty of its Author. This manifestation of the divine attributes belongs therefore to the essence of the created being. God, in bringing it out of nothingness, wishes and must wish (under pain of contradiction) that it should manifest in some degree His infinite perfection. This manifestation is called the *exterior* glory of God.

62. (4) *God is the chief and last end of man.* Each creature is essentially a manifestation of God; but man, as an intelligent and free creature, is evidently, in the visible world, the most complete, the most noble image of the Deity. His very essence requires, therefore, that He should glorify the Author of his being, according to the degree of his perfection, that is, through his *intelligence* and *will.* These superior and highest faculties he should use according to the requirement of their nature. His intelligence must seek for the truth, his will must aspire to what is good. And as the first cause, the only source of all truth and of all good is, at the same time, the Sovereign Truth and the Supreme Good, it follows that God is necessarily the final term, the obligatory end, of the knowledge and love of man. His intelligence will rise up by degrees to this height, by tracing in nature the footsteps of the Creator, thus ascending from the wonders of creation to its Maker.

A sublime truth was uttered by St. Paschal Baylon, when he said: "God being infinite wisdom, *they* are true philosophers, who love Him above all things."

It is, therefore, through man, and through him alone, that the visible world attains its end. He is in truth the lord of creation, the link joining the temporal with the eternal, the creature with the Creator.

Let us remark that this end of man, *derived from his*

essence, viz., his essential dependence, is necessarily willed by God. This efficacious will of God explains the obligation or binding force of the natural law. God wishes and must wish that man should glorify Him, He must make it a necessity for him to do so. Now the only necessity which is compatible with the essence of a free being is the *moral obligation.* In other words man is bound to act so as to procure the glory of God, which is the last and principal end that the Almighty had in view in the creation of the world. But God, in His infinite wisdom and goodness, has so combined together the furtherance of His glory and the interests of His rational creatures, that, whilst man glorifies God by rendering to Him homage, reverence, obedience and love, he secures to himself, at the same time, the highest boon that may be attained by him, viz., perfect, infinite, eternal happiness in the world to come.

But let us attentively remark that whoever aims at the fulfillment of this imperative, essential duty, viz., procuring God's glory by rendering to Him homage, reverence, obedience and love, can do so only by the practice of virtue, that is, by the faithful observance of God's holy law. And no sooner does any human creature swerve from the path of virtue by transgressing the divine law, than he ceases, from that very moment, to procure God's glory; for no homage, no reverence, no worship can be acceptable to Him, which is not accompanied by a virtuous, sinless life. (See Part V, n. 270, for further explanation of this important subject.)

But how sweet then and blessed is this obligation; *the manifestation of the divine glory is identically the supreme happiness of man.*

His intelligence, created for truth, cannot be satisfied otherwise than by the possession of the whole truth, that is of God.

His will, longing for happiness, infinite, so to speak, in its desire, is never satisfied with contingent, finite goods; it can rest only in the perfect Good, without admixture, in God. This reminds us of St. Augustine's exclamation: "My heart, O Lord, is made for Thee, and it can find no rest until it repose in Thee."

Thus, bound by his essence and essential dependence to manifest the glory of his Author, man can make no effort towards this end, without perfecting himself, without advancing towards happiness, his last blissful end.

He cannot refuse to procure the glory of God without renouncing happiness here and hereafter. As the chief primary purpose, which God intended by the creation of man is His own glory, through the manifestation of His divine attributes and perfections, such an end, being absolute and unconditional, will be infallibly obtained. Therefore it does not depend on man to glorify God, or not to glorify Him. The only thing that depends on him, and is left to his free choice, is the manner of glorifying Him. By voluntary submission to God's supreme will, through the faithful observance of His commandments, he will glorify God on earth, and will sing forever God's mercy and goodness in Heaven. Hence in every just soul the Lord's promise shall be fulfilled: *"Whosoever shall glorify me, him will I glorify."* (1 Kings, 2, 30.) On the other hand, by resistance to the divine will through the transgression of His holy law, man freely chooses as his everlasting lot the proclamation of God's omnipotence and justice by his punishment in hell. It is then in our power either to secure to ourselves a blissful abode with God and His angels in Heaven through loyalty to His commands, or, by our rebellion against the Lord, to excavate for ourselves a dungeon with Satan and the reprobates in Hell. The alternative is terrible; but God cannot be robbed of His glory by the wickedness of men. Victory over sin is the indispensable condition for deserving eternal bliss (St. Thomas, I, q. 19, a. 6).

63. Conclusion. God, the first cause of all things, is therefore the final end of all things. Every existing thing comes from Him and returns to Him. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End: *"Ego sum Alpha et Omega, principium et finis."* (Apoc. 1, 8.) It is for us, if we wish to be truly wise, so to live, that all our actions, all our thoughts shall tend always, and fully to the glory of God. There and there only is to be found duty as well as happiness.

Let us close this chapter with the elegant sentiments of Bishop John S. Vaughan (Faith and Folly, p. 436), most appropriate to our purpose:

"All assures us that we are not as the flower that fades, nor as the butterfly which unfolds its beauty to one bright summer and is heard of no more. On the contrary, our whole nature demands a future in which our capacities may receive their full development, and every wish its complete satisfaction. As well distrust the hunger that craves for food, or the thirst that seeks the cooling waters, as mistrust the deep and fervid language of the heart. He who has implanted these longings within us is God, the author of our being and the infinitely Wise. And does infinite Wisdom create without a just and holy purpose? If He fills our hearts with insatiable yearnings after an eternal life of light and love, are we to suppose He has made no provision for their realization? Shall we dare affirm that God, who plants the irresistible desire of eternal life in our souls, plants it there in mockery and derision? A thousand times, no! It is as certain as we live that, if He has so constituted our nature that it clamors for the eternal joys of heaven, it is simply because He intends to stay the cry He has raised, and to grant us one day the desires of our hearts. Eternity awaits us, and even now stretches out its arms to enfold us. We are children of eternity, not of time. Such a truth is not merely most consoling, but it is one which must, when realized, exercise a most marked influence on our lives.

"If made for eternity, then we must live for eternity; and not entangle ourselves in the interests of time. If we are destined to live forever, then we must not sacrifice everything for the vain and empty pleasures of a day, nor make any temporal pursuit whatever the end and supreme purpose of our life."

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PART II

THE HUMAN SOUL

ITS LIBERTY, SPIRITUALITY, IMMORTALITY

64. This part is not, like the preceding, a necessary preliminary to Christian apologetics. It is impossible to bow to the divine revelation without first admitting God's existence and His veracity. Both these truths must be either taken for granted or demonstrated. The foregoing part shows that we preferred to follow the latter course for grave reasons, pointed out in the preface to this work. But it is not so with regard to the human soul, its spirituality and immortality. It does not necessarily play any important part in the premises and principles rationally demonstrating the foundations of Faith. Nevertheless, as the denial of its existence and principal faculties would carry along with it the ruin of the whole edifice of religion, as far, at least, as men are concerned, we deem it opportune to establish on a firm basis the principal tenets that refer to the human soul. We intend then to present here a summary demonstration of its leading faculties or properties, and a refutation of the most common objections raised against our position.

Though anxious to be plain, elementary and brief, yet we did not deem it advisable, either to hide the difficulties of our opponents, or to exclude the most convincing proofs, even when somewhat difficult to grasp. To act otherwise would be treasonable to the cause of truth, and a reflection on our readers, who expect to be convinced by solid arguments, and deservedly scorn gratuitous assertions. And when in our days they are confronted by captious sophisms and so called

scientific objections, must they be taken by surprise, and be unable to answer them?

Nevertheless, our limited space necessarily compels us to omit certain more abstruse questions, which, however, are not strictly needed for our purpose, and the discussion of which is the province of more cultured and mature minds.

Our treatise is divided into three chapters. We will demonstrate: The Liberty of the human soul; its Spirituality; and its Immortality.

CHAPTER I

LIBERTY OF THE HUMAN SOUL

§ I. Preliminary Notions

65. **1. The Soul.** To ask: *Have we a soul?* is to propose an ambiguous question, as the answer may have two altogether different meanings. (*a*) The soul (in Latin *anima*) may mean, according to its literal definition, what animates or vivifies the body, the principle or cause of its spontaneous movements, of its life. Now it is clear that we live; this is an incontestable fact. Hence, unless we run counter to the principle of causality (n. 26), and admit effects without a cause to produce them, all must agree on this fact that we have in ourselves a principle of life, whatever that be. To put the question under this aspect is to answer it.

But that same question, *Have we a soul?* may be understood in a different sense.

(*b*) For we may ask if this *soul*, this principle of life, is something totally distinct from the body, something essentially different from it, ruling over it and surviving it? This is the real problem that we have to solve. To some Materialists, the soul is a kind of *collective noun*, comprehending in itself the different functions of the bodily organism—and the organism itself, according to their view, is nothing else but the assemblage, the combination and particular association and harmonious working of physical and chemical forces. It is then our task to prove the existence in man of a principle

that is at once free, spiritual and immortal, and consequently essentially and radically distinct from the material organism which it animates.

66. **2. Liberty.** This word has several meanings.

(*a*) If taken in a very general wide sense, it indicates freedom from impediment or restraint. In this sense we say that the swallow in the air, the lion in the desert and the stream winding its way in the valley are free; modern nations, if exempt from servitude, call themselves free.

As many as are the impediments or restraints so many are the kinds of liberty corresponding to them (Part VII, ch. v). Thus (*a*) we have physical liberty, when man's actions are not subject to any external violence or constraint. Man enjoys (*b*) moral liberty, when neither his own normal conscience nor any competent authority forbids him to act. Citizens possess (*c*) civil or political liberty, when political authority does not interfere with the exercise of their legitimate rights. Such liberty is guaranteed to all American citizens by Articles XIV and XV of the amendments to the Constitution. There is (*d*) religious liberty, when civil rulers do not impede the exercise of one's right of conscience in the practice of any religion compatible with the rights of the state. Such right is secured to all American citizens by Article I of the amendments to the Constitution.

(*b*) Without entering into an irrelevant examination of all the meanings in which the term liberty may be taken, let us at once inquire what kind of liberty there may be in the *voluntary acts* of man.

Let us remark at the very outset that there are in us two kinds of acts that are called voluntary. One kind is produced or elicited by the will itself; the other is only commanded or enjoined by it. The former remain, so to speak, inside, in the interior abode of the will, such as desire, hatred, joy, resolution, etc. The latter are originated *under the impulse of the will* from diverse faculties, both exterior and interior, e.g., speaking, walking, certain fanciful combinations, etc.

These previous concepts being understood, we may now proceed to consider *two kinds of liberty;* one regarding acts

capable of being enjoined by the will; the other springing from the will itself; liberty then, in *voluntary* acts, signifies:

67. **A. Immunity from Constraint, or External Violence.** The prisoner loaded with chains, and a man whose arm or hand is forcibly held by another, are not *free.* And why? Because their movements, instead of being subject to their will, are made in spite of it. Such constraint—as examples prove—may be brought to bear on acts ordinarily subject to the empire of the will, and on the faculties, whence they proceed; but it can exert no action on the acts emanating from the will, and much less on the will itself. The moment an external force attempts to constrain me and do me violence, I feel that I can either resist or consent; that I may will or not will, just as I choose. It is on the other hand absurd to suppose that there can be any such thing as violence or constraint on any act of the will. In fact, every act implying a constraint must be produced by an *external force against the inclination or purpose of the will.* Now, to will is a vital act by which the will *moves* or *inclines itself* toward some object. In the notion that the same identical act can be the result both of constraint and of the will, there is implied an evident contradiction.

The will then is incontestably free, if taken in its first significance of freedom from external violence.

Liberty in voluntary acts means also:

B. Immunity from interior necessity, that is, the faculty of determination, of choosing one's acts without being determined by an internal, necessary and irresistible impulse. This faculty, clearly understood by all, must not be confounded with what is called *spontaneity.* The first movements of passion, of fright, which escape or precede the deliberation of the will, are perfectly *spontaneous;* but they were not chosen by the will; they are not *free* in the sense that we have just described.

We can never insist too much on the radical distinction between *spontaneity* and *liberty properly so called.* Many authors confound these two notions altogether disparate. Let us allege some instances in point. In a book otherwise credit-

able on many accounts, we read as follows: "We are endowed with internal *liberty,* conditioned by the general laws of the Universe, and within the limits of those general laws we preserve a certain amount of *spontaneity* or of reacting force more or less great." (Prins, "Penal Science and Positive Right," No. 268, Brussels, 1899.) Herzen, with a multitude of other writers, does not hesitate to hold that "the more a movement is spontaneous, the freer it is," and then, perverting all established notions, openly declares that "liberty consists in *following the laws of our own being.*" (Physiological Chats, p. 333, Paris, Alcan, 1899.)

That man believes he can choose certain acts, according to his pleasure, without being driven to such choice by an irresistible impulse, behold here an undeniable fact. Is it reasonable so to believe? Does the human will possess the faculty of self-determination? In other words:

Does the human will, enlightened by reason, and in the presence of all the conditions necessary for the exercise of its activity, really possess the power of acting or not acting, of making one choice rather than another?

Or is it by a certain fatality or inevitable necessity driven to the performance of its acts?

Such is the question so passionately debated in our days.

Before enumerating the adversaries, and establishing our thesis, let us complete these preliminary ideas and definitions by some important remarks.

Remarks. 1. Liberty, as defined above, is called also (*a*) Free Arbitrament—Free Judgment (*Liberum Arbitrium* of the Latins). The reason and meaning of this term will appear in the course of our demonstration (n. 74).

(*b*) Liberty of Indifference, for when diverse goods, several choices are presented to it, the free being remains indifferent as to its deliberation; it is not necessitated, or *determined* by either interior or exterior causes; it remains master, so to speak, of the situation, free to embrace at its will the object of its choice.

The capital point here is to understand well that this indifference is not to be likened to that of an inert mass

of matter, that is indifferent to receive various forms, and to undergo various impulses from external agencies. On the contrary, the indifference of free will is wholly and essentially active, not inert.

(*c*) Physical or Natural Liberty as opposed to *Moral* Liberty. The latter is the faculty of acting without violating any law, or any moral obligation, when the act in question is not forbidden by any competent authority or legitimate injunction. Briefly, Physical Liberty is freedom from violence, or physical coercion; Moral Liberty is the absence of any prohibition. The difference between the two is quite obvious. The man who has the physical power (physical liberty) of violating his oath knows full well that he is morally bound to keep it.

2. As in the course of this treatise we shall frequently speak of will, conscience, intelligence, etc., it is well that we should say something on the faculties of the soul with a view to prevent unpleasant misconceptions and embarrassing mistakes.

Even without the aid of profound philosophical knowledge, each one of us is fully aware of the diversity of his several actions, such as I imagine, I understand, I think, I will, . . . whence this immediate logical conclusion is drawn: therefore I possess the faculty of imagining, of understanding, of thinking and of willing. Now we ask: Are these faculties so many realities? Are they distinct powers of our nature, and are they also distinct from one another? We might make abstraction from this controversy, for it has no bearing on our present question of human liberty. What is important is to be on our guard against that too frequent deception of representing to ourselves human intelligence, will, imagination, conscience, as so many distinct personages or individuals appearing in turn on the scene to play their part, as is done by the several dramatis personæ or characters on the stage—as if reason studied the motives, weighed both sides and then yielded its place to another agent, the will, which cuts off the question and decides.

This supposed process is as ridiculous as it is dangerous.

Let us not for a moment forget that only one person is acting all along. It is I that think, deliberate and decide. It is the same identical individual that performs different acts.

Our opponents take it for granted, of course, without a shred of proof, that such things as Spirituality and Liberty are simply mentally contrived hypotheses without foundations, or *a priori* suppositions fabricated without any anterior data of experience.

According to them, on the contrary, it is *determinism* (n. 84) that is the result of *experimental* science. We, however, hold that liberty and spirituality are facts *testified by experience,* and we shall prove it. But here let us explain well what we mean. There are several kinds of experience. To suppose, as the majority of the determinist writers do, that liberty and spirituality are something that can be handled, weighed and measured—something that may be experimented upon on the table of the laboratory, as it is done with physical, chemical and physiological phenomena; obstinately to refuse all means of investigation except that of external experiments, all this is equivalent to closing to themselves the way to a successful search; it is to seek for a thing where one is assured beforehand that he will never find it. It is clear that unless one denies *a priori* that the human soul is both spiritual and free, it must be admitted that, if it exists at all, it must necessarily manifest itself by effects proportionate to its essence, consequently by operations altogether immaterial or spiritual; for, as sound philosophy and common sense teach us, all effects must be proportionate or conformable to their cause.

See in the "Revue scientifique," vol. XII, p. 737, article entitled "Free Will and Positive Science." In this production, remarkable under many aspects, M. Sully-Prudhomme demonstrates in a peremptory manner that positive science, with its methods and means of observation, is radically incapable of proving that the Universe is governed by an *absolute necessity* to the exclusion of a necessary self-existing personal Being, the Creator and Ruler of the world.

What is highly absurd and extremely amusing is to wit-

ness most of these positivists declaring beforehand that liberty and spirituality are concepts unknown, nay *unknowable* to Science, and then conclude in the name of the same Science that liberty and spirituality do not exist.

§ II. Adversaries

68. I. Let us mention, at the very outset, the advocates of *Absolute Indeterminism*, viz: Descartes, Kant, Fichte, etc. According to them the will is so indetermined in itself that it deliberates in all its acts without any motive whatsoever. This kind of absolute free will is evidently contradicted by the testimony of experience (see Payot, "The Education of the Will," Paris, Alcan). Unhappily this untenable, exaggerated notion of free will has proved favorable to the cause of our opponents, who pretend to saddle on all the defenders of free will the Cartesian view of it.

II. But the true opponents of free will are the so-called *Determinists*, according to whom all the acts of the human will are ruled, fixed and determined:

(*a*) Either by Destiny or Fate (as the Fatalists hold);

(*b*) Or by an irresistible impulse of divine grace, as Huss, Luther, Calvin, Jansenius and Baius taught;

(*c*) Or again, by *psychological* laws, as necessary and as uncontrollable as the mechanical laws ruling the phenomena and movements of the material world, the theory held by Leibnitz and the famous German psycho-physiologist, W. Wundt. To the same category belong the following writers of modern times: Moleschott, Herbert Spencer, Stuart Mill, Aug. Comte, Richet, Herzen, Büchner, A. Fouillée, and others;

(*d*) Or, by the intellect, which dictates to and imposes on the will all its acts; hence the school of the so-called Intellectual Determinists,

(*e*) Or lastly, by nothing else but the laws of mechanics. This is *mechanical and materialistic determinism* pure and simple, the most widely spread theory among infidel scientists, and the true enemy in the present hour. Its fundamental axiom is: There exists nothing outside of physico-chemical

forces; the acts of the will, the functions of the brain and of the nervous system, are entirely subject, like all the planetary movements, to the universal laws of matter.

§ III. Proofs of Free Will

69. Let us state our thesis in the clearest terms: When all the conditions necessary for the performance of a given action are present, human will is not constrained either by an outward impulse, or by any interior necessity; it remains in full possession of its activity, capable of determining itself and of choosing its own acts. We shall now proceed to demonstrate it.

First Proof—The Testimony of Conscience

Preliminary Remarks. The conscience, or rather consciousness here referred to, is not *moral* conscience, that is, the judgment that we pass on the motive, or goodness of our acts; it is the faculty, whatever it be, by which we perceive and realize the presence of our interior acts and their nature.

Man believes that he is free. He is firmly convinced that many of his acts, far from being the result of fatalism, or an irresistible destiny, depend entirely on his will; that he alone has chosen these acts, and that on himself alone rests the responsibility of such acts.

This is a fact or a result of experience; a fact so clearly testified that Determinism, whilst striving to evade this testimony and to discard it as an illusion, still does not dare deny it. It is now for us to prove the veracity of the inner consciousness of free will. Any manual of Catholic Philosophy can furnish to the reader abundant proofs of the trustworthiness of the testimony of consciousness.

But before reasoning on this fact, it is highly important to examine it attentively, and to study its characters and conditions. Were we to proceed otherwise, we should run the risk of building up a theory either incomplete or false.

70. **Object of This Internal Conviction.**

(*a*) Whether we listen to the interior voice of our own

conscience, or we consider the judgments and conduct of others, one primary truth becomes manifest, and it is the following: the liberty in which man believes, that which he attributes to himself and his fellow-beings, is no other but the liberty properly so called, the one that we have defined above (n. 67) under the terms of physical liberty, liberty of indifference, free will.

(*b*) We are able to distinguish with perfect clearness the characteristic note or discriminating mark of our free acts, their difference from other acts, even those that are most spontaneous. This note, this difference we perceive as something *positive*, as a perfection of our own activity, as a privilege of which we are deservedly proud.

It is therefore false to assert that the idea of liberty only implies something negative.

That is what Herzen asserts in his book entitled "Physiological Chats," p. 333, where he speaks thus: "From whatever point of view we examine human liberty, we find that it is a purely negative concept." We admit that we give expression to the idea of liberty under a kind of negative form, a thing to be attributed to the imperfection of language; hence we say that liberty means negation or absence of necessity; but, nevertheless, it is plain that this idea presents to our mind something truly real, since all free acts are conceived as endowed with a special property, which distinguishes them from all the others.

(*c*) What then are those acts which we judge to be free? They are precisely those of which we possess a perfect consciousness, and which we recognize to be absolutely free. This is a point to be carefully considered. The Determinists pretend to maintain that the consciousness of liberty is a sheer illusion. We grant that there may be at times some illusion, when it is a question of acts done without sufficient reflection and of which we may not be fully conscious; but is it at all possible that such illusion should grow, should endure, nay, become still more deceptive, even when we become more and more conscious of our own individual personal activity, and of the motives that move us to act? Hence we may reason-

ably conclude that the consciousness of liberty does not proceed from the ignorance of the cause or motives that determine us to act (n. 90).

2. Characters of this Conviction.

(*a*) It is *universal;* all men admit it.

(*b*) It is *indestructible.* Man, no matter what he may do, can never reach a serious, honest, intimate conviction, that he is not free. We freely admit that, owing to the authority of some scientific man, and to some captious objection, and impelled by enticing allurements of certain passions, men may be found who will entertain some doubts on the existence of free will and admit, in theory at least, the comfortable and irresponsible system of Determinism. But they themselves are compelled to confess that theirs is not a true, honest conviction. In fact, do you wish to put it to the test? Observe how the most obstinate Determinists act whenever they happen to be wronged in their property, or in their honor. See how they resent the injustice done to them, and how loudly they assert the fact of liberty and the personal accountability of those that have offended them! See, moreover, the striking contradiction of the Determinists, who, under the banner of freethought, combat against the Christians holding firmly to the truth attested by reason and confirmed by divine revelation. We know and we shall prove in Part IX that the freethought theory is radically wrong. But if it be once admitted, reason and common sense will at once tell us that no man can consistently with it condemn or reject any other belief diametrically opposed to freethought.

3. Consequence of This Conviction. From the consciousness and persuasion of free will follow notions, judgments, actions, which possess a special character and a supreme importance. All these ideas, these judgments, these acts, that embrace and comprehend the whole moral life of men, can have no significance except on the supposition that the fact of man's liberty is admitted.

But let us consider this matter more closely still.

(*a*) In the first place there is the obligation or binding force of duty (n. 7). We conceive it as a matter of absolute

necessity the obligation to perform or to omit certain acts; but this imperative necessity has nothing to do with physical necessity. On the contrary, it leaves our physical liberty perfectly untrammelled, and our power of choice completely free. But more than this, our will is perfectly aware of its independent action in all its operations, and that we cannot impede its free action, just as we cannot conceive the obligation of doing a single act independently of our will.

(*b*) Moreover, there is to be taken into account that clear, fundamental notion of *responsibility*. In fact we may here pertinently ask, what is it that constitutes the difference of our judgments between the actions of an insane man, and the same actions done by an assassin in the full possession of his faculties? The latter is held to be responsible for his acts because he is known to be free, whilst the former is not considered accountable just because he is not acting as a free being, but rather as an individual, who, owing to some mental disorder, cannot be responsible for his deeds.

(*c*) Examine the ideas of *merit* and *demerit*. What an immense difference between the feelings that we experience, as we consider the genial warmth we receive from the sun, and the most tender devotedness of a loving mother for her child! For we know full well that all the benefits received from that brilliant luminary come to us from an irresponsible material being, whilst the touching affection of a mother is the result of a free response to the maternal instinct of love for her offspring.

(*d*) And what shall we say about the notions of *virtue* and *vice*, right and wrong? Is there any one so stupid as not to perceive the difference between an unmanageable horse and a wicked man? All our judgments, our social relations, our sentiments and feelings of esteem, indignation, confidence, gratitude, etc., are ultimately based on a profound conviction of our own freedom, and that of others.

(*e*) We shall reach the same conclusion if we inquire into the true meaning of the terms, *rewards* and *punishments*. There is a great difference in our proceedings when we have to deal with animals which we strive to induce to perform

some action, both by caresses and infliction of pain, and the use of recompense and punishment when we have to deal with a man. It is only in the latter instance that we recognize the existence of a will capable of freely choosing to act or not to act; and it is precisely on account of the good or bad use of liberty that men are either rewarded or punished.

(*f*) A strong argument in favor of Liberty can be derived from the requirements of jurisprudence with regard to the last wills of deceased persons. As it is well known, these testamentary documents are expressed with such preliminary sentences as the following: "I, N . . . enjoying the full use of my faculties, freely and voluntarily declare that the last will or disposition of my property is as follows," etc., etc. And when the validity of a will is contested in the Probate courts, what is the principal plea advanced by the contestants, and which, if duly sustained and corroborated by witnesses, will either annul the will of the deceased, or greatly modify its provisions? It is to prove that the author of the will, owing to mental derangement, or undue influence from interested persons, could not act with that full, untrammelled liberty required for such documents by the courts of all the civilized nations of the world. Is not this another most overwhelming proof of the conviction of mankind regarding the existence and exercise of human freedom?

Briefly. Supposing for a moment that free will were only an hypothesis or a supposition, it would be necessary to conclude that this hypothesis contained after all, a precious admission; for it is an *indispensable* hypothesis, much more indispensable indeed for the explanation of the events of the *moral world* than the hypothesis of the presence of ether through boundless space is for the explanation of the phenomena of the *physical world.* As Prins states in his work on "Penal Science and Positive Right": *"Without Liberty humanity ceases to have any significance."*

Conclusion. The intimate conviction of mankind of the existence of free will, as well as of its characters, its nature, its paramount influence on the whole tenor of human life—behold here an incontestable fact, which calls for a satisfac-

tory explanation, and for some reason sufficient to account for its existence! We are now going to prove that the only admissible explanation is *the real, actual existence of human liberty.*

71. **First Argument.** *If this conviction or persuasion is false, then no certitude of any kind will ever be possible.*

We have just examined the characteristic notes of this conviction; it is universal, clear, distinct and indestructible. All honest, fair-minded men will agree on this point, that, namely, they are as much persuaded of the fact of their possessing liberty as they are of that of their own existence.

How am I certain of existing, and of acting? By the evident attestation of consciousness. Now this same identical consciousness assures me, *with equal evidence,* that I am free. If this second testimony is false and utterly unreliable, then I can no longer be sure of the trustworthiness or veracity of the first. And this is true of every certitude that belongs to the domain of consciousness.

But this is not all. For it must be said that in the theory of Determinism all kinds of certainty, in fact all the sciences become absolutely impossible, since their very foundation would be thereby sapped and demolished. In fact, I ask, how are we certain of the existence of bodies, of the physical laws, of the phenomena of the external, visible world, all things constituting the very objects or materials of the several sciences? Only because consciousness testifies to us that we have experimented, or verified or learned them. But if the testimony of consciousness is of no value, and consequently is not to be trusted, then we can no longer be certain of having made any of those experiments, or of having seen or learned any of those things. Now is not this system destined to bring about the destruction and ruin of all science?

72. **Second Argument.** *The Moral Law* really exists; but it could not exist without liberty. Liberty, therefore, must exist. The existence of the moral law has been proved above (nn. 5–6). We have also demonstrated the impossibility of morality without liberty (nn. 70, 88). The conclusion is

plain enough. Reason and Revelation compel us to admit these two undeniable truths or facts, that is, the existence of the moral law and of human liberty.

73. **Third Argument.** Let us for a moment suppose that the deterministic hypothesis is true, and that consequently human liberty is a sheer illusion. What would follow? In that case all the acts, deliberations and judgments of men would be ruled by an inevitable, absolutely necessity. The conviction itself of the possession of liberty would be simply a mechanical, inevitable result of the laws and forces of nature.

But it is absurd to suppose that the necessary result of natural forces should contain something false and erroneous, viz., our supposed deceptive conviction of possessing liberty, for then error would be inevitable. Therefore the persuasion of the real possession of liberty is veracious, and this fact destroys the hypothesis of the deterministic system.

Second Proof—Analysis of the Free Act

74. In making the preceding considerations we started from this fact: *Consciousness attests that man is free.* This fact, as well as its character and effects, have furnished to us invincible arguments enabling us to demonstrate the reality of our free will. We ought to be satisfied with such proofs.

But we must not overlook the fact that the human mind strives to enter still more deeply into this subject. It is anxious to make a yet more profound investigation of the question at issue; it seeks to find out how man becomes conscious of his liberty. This study, rendered opportune, nay, even necessary, in our days, on account of prevailing sophisms, requires more penetration and sagacity. We do not by this avowal mean to assert that we are here confronted by an insoluble problem, whatever may be the oratorical exaggeration and the loud talk of a modern controversialist exclaiming: "Remember that liberty is but an enigma; when our reason undertakes to analyze it, it becomes completely lost and baffled in the attempt" (see Mgr. d'Hulst, Con-

férences de Notre-Dame, 1891, vol. I, p. 99). The analysis here referred to is delicate and subtle, we freely grant; but is it not true that there exist some notions or concepts quite simple and clear in themselves, and which, nevertheless, become complicated and obscure when one attempts to explain and demonstrate them? See, for instance, what becomes of the luminous idea of the beautiful, when dissected and analyzed by theorists; and the same may be said of the first principles of mathematics, of the most evident truths, such as our own existence, when it is a question of defending them against the sophistries of some cunning skeptic! No wonder, then, if some difficulty is met with in analyzing the simple idea of a free act. At all events, since we here are confronted with a real difficulty, let us not disguise it, and let us clearly determine the question at issue.

75. 1. It would be ridiculous to conceive and investigate human liberty as if it were a sort of *physical quality*, perceived by consciousness or discovered by reason. Such physical quality does not exist either in the immanent acts immediately or directly produced by the will, or in the acts elicited or commanded by it (n. 55). Whether free or not free, such acts are *physically* or *identically* the same. See what passes within us when some sinful desire, some sentiment of revenge arises involuntarily in ourselves; and then afterward we become conscious of its sinfulness and may entertain it with deliberation. It is all along the same act *physically* considered; but if looked upon from a *moral* point of view, we find that it has been completely changed.

This is a good occasion for directing the reader's attention to the ideas and realities of the moral order as essentially distinguished from the phenomena of the physical material world. Sad experience shows that minds addicted to the study of the exact sciences, such as physics, chemistry, geology, biology, and the like, are particularly exposed to the error of believing only in realities that are tangible, sensible, in short, material. Thus Huxley, the most renowned biologist of his day, in "Lay Sermons," ch. xiv, stated that "we shall sooner or later arrive at a mechanical equivalent of conscience just as we

have arrived at a mechanical equivalent of heat.'' By thus assimilating the wholly spiritual faculty of conscience to a material agent, he utterly nullifies the priceless value of its testimony in witnessing to the existence of the moral law. There is another example nearer home. A short time ago the newspapers announced that Thomas Edison had declared himself a materialist. How did this come about? He had satisfied himself that the physico-chemical forces at work in the brain, with the resultant electrical effects were sufficient to account for all the phenomena of conscious life in men. This was the first public intimation that the distinguished American inventor had turned philosopher. But, notwithstanding his well-deserved celebrity in the experimental line, his profession of materialism left the world wholly unperturbed. No believer saw in it a new menace to his faith, and no unbeliever found in it a new justification of his unbelief. The late Cardinal Gibbons, in a short but forcible reply, refuted the glaring blunder of that famous experimentalist, and showed that it would have been better for his reputation if he had kept himself within the legitimate sphere of his competence and acted on the old maxim: *Sutor ne ultra crepidam*—the shoemaker must stick to his last.

76. 2. It is useless to seek for liberty in the act that has already been performed. When such an act has once existed, it cannot be non-existing.

Where, then, must we look to overtake liberty in the very act, and to see it at work?

77. 3. Liberty, if it exists, must be found in the manner in which the act springs from the will. This cannot be ascertained unless we are able to prove that certain acts emanate from a faculty in full possession of its activity, which *determines* itself by its own proper motion. Now this is exactly what we are about to demonstrate regarding the faculty or power of free will.

78. Demonstration. What goes on within us when we are conscious of acting freely? Let us examine, attentively, candidly, the different successive phases or stages of the free act, namely, the several circumstances that make it possible,

that prepare, accompany and follow it; nothing must be overlooked, for the omission of even only one important datum may render false all our conclusions.

79. **First Phase.** *The Act of Knowledge.* Certain goods present themselves to our intelligence; it is a question of securing some advantages, or of enjoying some gratification, or of fulfilling some duty, etc. Without previous knowledge there can be no act of the will. As the Schoolmen are wont to put it: *Nihil volitum, quin præcognitum. Ignoti nulla cupido.*

80. **Second Phase.** *First Movement of the Will.* The moment a given object is presented to it, the will begins to act; either it embraces that object, or it repels it. At times the intellect, which perceives the proferred object, may at the outset reveal the disadvantages it entails. To avoid such disadvantages is also a kind of good toward which the will may direct itself, either by positively rejecting the object first proposed to it, or simply by diverting its attention from it, without stopping to consider the motives that might render it acceptable to it.

It sometimes happens that the deficiencies of the object do not appear at once; often inconsideration, the force of habit, the allurements of blind passion hide from us the bad consequences of our disorderly actions. In a case like this the first movement of our will is to tend toward the perceived object, certainly not by such an irresistible impulse as that which it would feel if it had a clear view of some absolutely perfect good; for the will can never so far deceive itself as to tend with the same enthusiasm to finite and imperfect objects, that might be presented to it, as it would naturally to those that are offered to it as good under every aspect.

But it may happen that there appears no reason why the will should not embrace the proposed good. In such a case there is a spontaneous adhesion, what is called the first movement of the will—the *motus primi primi* of the moralists—which, however, might also be prevented, if the intellect could have had a clear and timely perception; and when this occurs, there succeeds the act of reflection, which is the third phase.

81. **Third Phase.** *The Functions of Judgment on the Proposed Goods.* Reflection reveals to us in the proposed object a mixture of good and evil, advantages and disadvantages. Now the difficulty in attaining the desired object; now the impossibility of enjoying at the same time gratifications incompatible with one another; at times the only things presented to the mind are the defects of the proposed object; now all this proves evidently that a proposed good may be attractive under one point of view, and repelling under other aspects. This judgment is the very root and foundation of liberty. Man is free from the very fact that he is endowed with reason. Hence, as there can be no will without intellect, so there can be no intellect without will. A rational being must have intellect, because it must be able to compare, weigh and analyze the different objects presented to it; it must have a will, because it must move toward the objects apprehended by the intellect and cling to them. Would it not be the height of absurdity to suppose that an intelligent being must *necessarily will* what it does not acknowledge as necessarily desirable?

82. **Fourth Phase.** *Deliberation.* Deliberation, especially if protracted, is so evident a sign or mark of free will, that philosophers of the modern deterministic school have used all their efforts to pervert its true character. They assimilate the human will in the act of deliberating concerning different or opposite objects to a balance drawn down by the greatest weight; they represent the several motives urging the will as so many material attractions, such as those regulating physical or chemical phenomena.

Now consciousness attests the very reverse.

Deliberation is presented to us as something quite *voluntary,* imputable, and which may be culpable.

Observe man in the act of deliberating; he concentrates his attention on one point, puts aside a consideration; refuses or accepts either favorable or unfavorable influences. And when he becomes certain and convinced that such and such choice is absolutely preferable, and realizes the moral obligation and the necessity of the proposed act, far from feeling

himself constrained to the performance of any particular act, on the contrary, he feels himself to be perfectly free either to prolong at pleasure his deliberation, or to remove it again, to search for other reasons; in short, he enjoys the full exercise of his freedom. Before speaking of the next phase, which is decision, let the reader observe that if we distinguish *deliberation* from *decision* it is because in reference to some special act, deciding or the choosing of this or that course of action, the result of deliberation, is an evident sign of liberty. But all this cannot prevent man from deciding or not deciding to deliberate.

83. **Fifth Phase.** *Decision.* Here it is where liberty is properly exercised, and unless one capriciously persists in being blind to the plainest facts, he can easily tell how he acts, and that his choice, whatever it be, is the outcome of his free will. As a matter of fact consciousness is not limited to the perception of one isolated act; for it embraces at once altogether the five phases described above; it attests that the knowledge of the object, the judgment, the deliberation, the comparing of motives, in a word, all that took place beforehand leaves us complete masters of the situation, free to decide one way or another, according to our pleasure. And the same consciousness loudly proclaims the fact that no necessity whatever compels us to the performance of the last act, which is the final decision, the concluding result of our voluntary choice.

The preceding analysis has shown to us how solidly grounded is the consciousness of free will; and at the same time, explains and justifies all the consequences that inevitably follow from the exercise of such gift, viz., the existing reality of moral obligation, of personal responsibility, remorse and repentance, merit and demerit, reward and punishment. It is the intimate conviction of man's freedom that justifies us in extolling the heroism of the soldier who dies in the defense of his country, and in branding with vituperation and infamy the vile coward that betrays it. And it is this same conviction that fills us with unbounded admiration for the Christian martyrs, and with utter detestation for their

iniquitous executioners. Hence to name virtue and vice, praise and blame, recompense and chastisement; to assert the essential distinction between good and evil, right and wrong; the enacting of laws, the expressing of repentance, the infliction of penalties, the establishment of tribunals, the codes of jurisprudence, the appointing of judges, the police force, the prisons and the gallows, all these facts proclaim in an unmistakable language the existence and continuous exercise of man's liberty, among all the nations of the world, whether civilized or barbarian, ancient or modern, past or present. In conclusion, as Fr. Holaind justly remarks in his excellent manual entitled "Natural Law and Legal Practice," the formidable array of arguments that are adduced by the defenders of human liberty prove that "mankind is not mistaken in upholding it; in thinking that good and bad actions are imputable to those who accomplish them. Mankind, therefore, is not wrong in holding firmly the doctrine of imputability; but imputability necessarily involves freedom. Both come to us borne up by the songs of the poets, the eloquence of the wisest men, and the consent of all civilized races. No source of error can be found to account for this *universal* consent. I may well say *universal,* for the few men who deny freedom in theory, constantly support it in practice. It is a *moral intention;* consequently the illusions of the senses have nothing to do with it. It is a check on the passions of men; therefore passions could not have inspired men with this belief. Nothing remains but to take it as one of those primary, self-evident truths, which may be sometimes obscured by sophistry, but which, in spite of all sophisms, win and retain the assent of mankind" (p. 107).

§ IV. Objections

Remark. We need not stop to answer the difficulties, drawn from what may be called *Theological Determinism.* The teachings of the heresiarchs Calvin, Luther, Jansenius, who deny the compatibility of human liberty with the efficacy of divine grace, are amply refuted by Holy Scripture and

Catholic Tradition. For the convenience of our clerical readers we give references at the end of Part II to some authors who have treated this question in a truly masterly style, and triumphantly answered all the arguments of our opponents.

The objection derived from divine prescience, which our adversaries hold to be an attribute tampering with man's liberty, has been met elsewhere and fully answered. (n. 47.) There remain only the objections put forward by the so-called philosophers and scientific men, to which it is now our duty to reply.

84. **First Objection.** In order that the will should prefer one alternative to another, it ought to have a sufficient reason for doing so. Now this sufficient reason can be nothing else but a higher and more enticing degree of good on the side of the alternative that has been chosen as preferable to any other. From which it follows that the will always and necessarily chooses the good that seems to it greatest and most attractive, just as the balance necessarily falls on the side of the heavier weight. This was the reasoning of Leibnitz (n. 68). But, urges the Determinist, if the will must *necessarily* choose in all cases the greatest good, it is plain that its liberty is simply an illusion.

Answer. Certainly every free act must have a sufficient reason; but where is that sufficient reason to be found? Shall we find it in the object presented, or in the *enticing* motives? In neither of them. For we actually find it in the *faculty* that *is attracted* toward the object. When a being naturally inert, that is, incapable of any self-movement, a stone for instance, is set in motion, the sufficient reason of this movement and of its direction must necessarily be traced to the impulse of an external force—and the same must be said of all vital and spontaneous acts (n. 67), which are evidently not free. But if we once admit that the human will is free —a fact demonstrated above (nn. 69–83), it will be seen at once that the power of choice is found in the will itself, which possesses the faculty of tending to and embracing the object of its own free deliberate choice; and this power itself is the sufficient reason why the will freely directs itself to this or

that object; and herein is found that sufficient reason for its act. Here let us remark that this supposed comparison between goods more or less great is a mere deception, for very often it is practically impossible. Besides, the goods presented to our choice have often nothing in common, as they are of an altogether different order, for instance, on one side the consciousness of duty, and on the other a sensual gratification. The former appears as a superior good from one point of view; the latter from another. Shall it be said, perchance, that the choice must be made between the different points of view, and that the point of view, which is best under every aspect, will constrain the will to choose it? If that is so, when a man has once seized the point of view that is in itself, viz., objectively the only important one—the *quid prodest*—what does it avail, such a man would be practically impeccable. Is not this conclusion contradicted by experience? The principle then of our opponents, from which it logically follows, must be radically wrong.

As noted above (n. 68), Leibnitz believed the human will to be so constructed that it must always necessarily obey the strongest motive and tend to the greatest good. This is the same as to assert that the will is always dominated consciously or unconsciously by the prevailing motive, a statement that perverts the true concept of liberty and is moreover contradicted by experience. It is a mistake to hold that when the will is presented with two unequal motives it is compelled to choose the better. Is not this contrary to the old adage: *Video meliora, proboque: deteriora sequor?* I see and approve what is better, and yet I pursue what is worse (Ovid, *Metaph.*, VII, 18). Experience shows that often, alas! men, through an abuse of their liberty, reject what is best, and prefer what is evil. All difficulty vanishes as soon as it is remembered that the freedom of the will resides formally not in the selection between different goods, but in the volition or rather the self-determination to move toward an object or not to move toward it, in which consists the freedom of exercise, the freedom of willing an act or of abstaining from willing it. Of course, the man would be foolish to choose the

less good, nay, what he knows to be evil, but it is consistent with our explanation to assert that he is free to be foolish, and face the consequences. As we read in St. Luke's Gospel (12, 20) here is what God said to the man who had preferred earthly gratifications to the service of the Lord: *"But God said to him: Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee: and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"* Holy Scripture referring in the Book of Wisdom (5, 4–6) to the fruitless repentance of the wicked in the next world recalls their own frank confession in these striking words: *"We fools esteemed their life* (of the just) *madness and their end without honor. Therefore we have erred from the way of truth."*

85. **Second Objection.** But, they insist, he that would choose an inferior good, would not act rationally. For man, being a rational creature, always chooses the good that appears to him greatest. Therefore it is reason, the intellect, that determines the will to act.

Answer. What is meant by *acting rationally?* If a man, confronted by the attraction of two different goods, should choose the inferior one, would he cease to be, on that account, a being endowed with reason? and would he be no longer able to see with his intellect what he might choose, and the reason for doing so? Certainly not. It is well known that men in the full use of their reason may choose to do very wicked things. Therefore the expression *to act rationally* is ambiguous, as it may convey two altogether different meanings. It may signify to act with the full use of the reasoning faculties either rightly or wrongly, as the case may be; and may mean to act in accordance with the dictates of right reason, which in itself naturally tends to what is good and conformable to the divine law. Hence Tertullian said of the human soul that it is naturally *Christian.*

We have previously seen (nn. 81–82) that reason, far from constraining the will, loudly proclaims the fact that a good, because apprehended as greater than another, does not, on that account, compel the will to embrace it. Moreover, is it not a fact, as evident as the light of noonday sun, that

man feels in himself no necessity whatever of doing in all things, and always, what appears to him more perfect? Facts testify that it is so.

86. **Third Objection.** Man chooses what he prefers, what he judges to be best for himself. He is therefore determined to this or that choice not by his free will, but rather by his temperament, his tastes, his hereditary or acquired dispositions. Hence he is not free.

Answer. (*a*) The consequences that legitimately follow from this sophism are amply sufficient to prove its absurdity. According to the theory of our adversaries, self-denial, disinterestedness, devotion to the defense of justice, heroic sacrifices, nay, even the shedding of one's blood for his country, and the endurance of martyrdom for Christ's sake, would be only the most revolting egoism, an affair of character, something like mechanical resultants, as irresistible as the instincts of the brutes! This indirect answer might suffice.

(*b*) We have shown above (nn. 83–84) that the judgment of preference, or the final decision, rests with the untrammelled power of the will. Consciousness attests that we at times take resolutions, which we know to be diametrically opposed to our true interests, whether spiritual or temporal, or to both; that nothing forces us to act in this manner, and that we feel at full liberty to choose between two alternatives *equally indifferent,* as for instance, to turn to the right rather than to the left, when strolling through town without any special end in view except that of taking a walk. It often happens that we determine to do something only for the pleasure of exercising our free will, without caring to know whether the action we prefer is there and then better for us than its opposite. We are then putting in practice the old saying, "Stat pro ratione voluntas" (the exercise of my freedom is my only reason). Lastly, we can acquire *voluntary* habits, and by the frequent repetition of the acts, which at first were repugnant to us, such habits become gradually more easy, more agreeable, and therefore preferable to their contraries. Hence our preferences, far from constraining our will, may change at the pleasure of the same will.

87. **Fourth Objection.** Determinism is, after all, nothing else but an extension or application of the *principle of causality.* No effect without cause is the eternal principle of mechanics and natural science. And in the world of living beings there is consequently no phenomenon without a reason. What precedes inevitably determines what is to follow. (Dr. J. Dallemagne in the *Review* of the University of Brussels, vol. II, p. 430. We give this objection as a sample of the doctrines taught in that University.)

Answer. (*a*) Let us notice beforehand the incoherence or inconsistency of unbelievers. When striving to destroy the metaphysical proofs of the existence of God they reject the principle of causality (n. 26), which forces them, whether they will it or not, to admit a Creator, the first cause of all contingent beings; and then these same unbelievers, changing tactics, resort to that same principle to attack free will! Is that honest? Is it logical?

(*b*) It is neither physics nor mechanics, but mental philosophy that demonstrates the truth of that principle.

(*c*) Moreover, scientific men ought to remember with what circumspection they must guard themselves against extending to one order of phenomena or facts, laws that belong to another entirely different order. If the sciences of mechanics and physics, for instance, were to intimate to us: "There is no liberty in our domain," we would reply that special arguments must be adduced to extend that law to the human will.

(*d*) What does, after all, the principle of causality require? Simply this, that every effect should have a *proportionate cause;* but it has nothing to do with the *mode of operation* of the cause itself. Therefore *necessary* effects must have a *necessary* cause; *free* effects a *free* cause. And as we have proved the existence of free effects, manifested in the countless deliberations of free acts, the principle of causality, invoked by our opponents, claims a free cause to account for their existence.

(*e*) Our adversaries play on the word *determined.* This term is sometimes taken as synonymous with *necessary;* but

it can also convey an entirely different meaning. Determined is something opposed to what is vague, indefinite, without any fixed place in time or space. In some sense we may correctly say that all our free acts are perfectly *determined;* because we perform them, though freely, in such particular circumstances, in such precise moment and place, in the presence of and with the aid of this or that person, etc.

88. **Fifth Objection.** Determinism does not destroy either morality or virtue, or their ideal.

Answer. (*a*) Determinism, as explained by the logical followers of that system, bluntly and boldly denies the very existence of morality and virtue. It would be as easy as it is superfluous to prove it (n. 17).

(*b*) It is true that certain Determinists, more cautious than the others, retain those terms, and speak at times of moral principles and virtuous acts; but their language can deceive only the simpletons; for they have stripped it of its true meaning (n. 70). As to the moral systems which they attempt to build on the ruins or negation of liberty, they are both absurd and repulsive. The mechanical and materialistic Determinism implies the total negation and rejection of all morality.

89. **Sixth Objection.** *Statistics* show that acts apparently more free are in constant proportion with certain definite causes; thus poverty, destitution or want, increase the number of thefts. Thus the yearly average of certain acts (such as criminal trials, murders, suicides), is almost uniform. Hence, it is argued, man is not free.

Answer. (*a*) Nothing is more deceptive than statistics. It is a procedure quite fashionable in our days, applied to almost anything, from which unreflecting minds may easily draw any conclusion they please. Doubtless, statistics may furnish valuable information; but only on condition that they be controlled by the rules of prudence.

(*b*) But in particular statistics have nothing to say regarding the liberty or necessity of each individual act; therefore they leave to the proofs of free will their full value. As to the pretended regularity or uniformity of social events, it

must be said that it is only *approximative,* a variable quantity; it is *an average* easily explained by the providential government of Almighty God; by the natural propensities of human nature, common to all, by the allurement of sensible goods, and the influence of seductions to which free will, to avoid the divine offense, ought to oppose a manly though painful resistance. Besides, as Fr. Maher, S.J., remarks, in his excellent work on Psychology, p. 422, "Statistics deal with societies of men, not with the particular human being, and there is no contradiction in the existence of regularity among actions of the community taken as a whole, while the members freely vary."

90. **Seventh Objection.** To the testimony of consciousness the Determinists frequently oppose the *illusions* of dreams, when a man falsely believes he is acting freely; also the illusions of the hypnotized, who, either in the hypnotic dream, or after recovering their consciousness, think they were acting freely, when it is well known that they only blindly and unwittingly executed the suggestions of the hypnotizer.

Answer. (See Part V, n. 213, about Hypnotism.)

(*a*) The reasoning of our adversaries comes to this: when dreaming man has the illusion of walking; therefore, when he is awake, he is not certain of walking, though he may be actually pacing his room. That is the logic of madmen.

(*b*) To experience illusions of sight and of hearing one must have previously seen colors, and heard sounds; and for a like reason no one could persuade himself that such and such an act is free, unless he had a previous consciousness of possessing a free will. Therefore this illusion in dreams, instead of disproving the existence of liberty, rather confirms it.

91. **Eighth Objection.** Our consciousness of liberty is, after all, nothing else but the *ignorance* of the motives determining us to act. This is the language of Hobbes, Spinoza, Bayle, and after them of all the Determinists, great and small.

Answer. (*a*) This objection proves nothing against the *existence* of free will. It only declares it to be *unknowable,* under the pretext that *perhaps* our acts *might be* determined

by some unknown or unconscious cause. If in our investigations we are *arrested* by a *perhaps* or a *might be,* no certitude of any kind will any longer be possible (n. 211).

(*b*) The consciousness of free will does not consist in the fact that one is not aware of an unknown or spontaneous impulse; but it is rather the perception of our own determination in full activity (nn. 82-83).

92. **Ninth Objection.** "To have consciousness of one's free will means to be conscious of having made a choice, and of having been able to choose differently. But this pretended consciousness is impossible. Consciousness tells me what I am doing, and what I feel; but to say what I can do does not fall within the domain of consciousness. Conscience is no prophet. We know what actually is, but not what will be or may be." This is the famous objection of Stuart Mill, expressed in his own words in his Criticism of Hamilton's Philosophy, xxiv.

Answer. A few words will suffice to refute this supposed formidable argument. It is nothing but a sophistical web that can only catch the simpletons.

The consciousness of free will is not and cannot be the perception of the *possibility* of a determination different from the actual decision or deliberation of the will. But as we have abundantly demonstrated above, it is the perception of a real fact, viz.: the true character or manner, in which the given act emanates from the faculty.

93. **Tenth Objection.** *The Conservation of Energy.* We are here confronted with what the French call the *cheval de bataille,* the war horse of scientific determinism of the militant type, the invulnerable Achilles of the old Trojan war. In the opinion of the opponents of free will the argument is decisive, crushing, unanswerable. We deem it advisable to discuss this question with some degree of fullness, for the advocates of that law turn their teachings against several fundamental truths upheld in our Apologetics, such as theism, miracles, free will, and the spirituality and immortality of the human soul. Let us see what is meant by the expression *Conservation of Energy,* and what are the particular features, which sound

philosophy must absolutely reject, as being thoroughly destitute of rational proofs.

In the first place, in the visible world we discern two distinct elements, inert, lifeless matter, and a second factor, which, under a thousand different forms, gives to this mass of matter movement, activity, development, regularity, etc. These activities are transformed into one another, thus motion may need heat, and, in its turn, it produces it. To raise a weight to a certain height some amount of labor, actual energy must be expended: but this weight thus raised, can in turn produce some work, set in motion, for instance, a clock; it has potential energy. The same must be said of chemical combinations, the alimentative process in the human body, and of like activities. The conservation of energy in the aforesaid examples consists in this that the several forms of actual and potential, available, energy are so transformed and exchanged that their sum total remains invariably the same. The results verified by numerous experiments have given rise to that law, and are formulated as follows: *"The sum of the kinetic, active, and potential energies of any isolated system of bodies remains constant, so that none is lost or gained"*—first proposition.

This conclusion has been still further generalized thus: *"The sum total of energies in the Universe always remains the same"*—second proposition. We find no difficulty whatever in admitting the Law of the Conservation of Energy as verified in the alleged examples and as stated in the first proposition. We hesitate, however, to endorse its generalization as conveyed in the second proposition, for we fully approve the contention of the distinguished French scientist, Lucien Poincaré, who writes: "It behooves us not to receive without a certain distrust the extension by some philosophers to the whole Universe of a property demonstrated for those restricted systems, which observation can alone reach. We know nothing of the Universe as a whole, and every generalization of this kind outruns in singular fashion the limit of experiment." (Catholic Encyclopedia, V, 424b.)

After stating in what the conservation of energy consists

and approving its working in nature within the specified limits, we undertake now to refute its unwarrantable extension to all beings and the consequences, which extreme Determinists illogically draw from that law.

The following are the assertions which we controvert:

(1) "All activity of mind upon body, and vice versa, must be excluded as being a disturbing factor contrary to the established law. For a mental or material process would be converted into material and mental activities, and the corresponding sum of physical energy would disappear."

(2) "Living and sentient, conscious beings are subject to this law."

(3) "No relation of cause and effect between mental and material beings can be admitted as being contrary to the law of Conservation of Energy."

(4) "If free will exercises any influence on our movements, if it precipitates, modifies, or stops them, then it adds a new degree of activity to the existing activities of the world; but it is proved that Energy is constant, viz., incapable of either addition or diminution, therefore there is no such thing as free will; for to acknowledge its existence would introduce an element of disorder in the Universe." (Harald Höffding, "Outlines of Psychology.")

Our Answer. All the preceding difficulties are based on assumptions and gratuitous principles: these being disproved, the whole fabric crumbles to the ground.

(1) The soul's activity on matter is a self-evident truism—a psychological fact admitted by all men. If in the mind of Determinists its action on bodies cannot be squared with the law of constant energy, we conclude so much the worse for the law. Thus, if our experience of radium seems likewise to contradict the law of conservation, we are not at liberty to deny the existence or activity of radium, or the fact that it emits heat.

(2) The Determinists have no reason to give for the extension of their law to living organisms, and much less to sentient beings of conscious faculties. Clerk Maxwell and Lord Kelvin, in formulating the law of energy, have always excluded

living beings. Moreover, many writers contend that the law of conservation of energy is not demonstrated as adapted to any living organism, for satisfactory experiments refer only to inanimate matter, whilst the very point in dispute is its applicability to living sentient beings. Besides, the human soul is the source of spiritual activities, thought and volition. It originates and controls bodily movements, and thus interferes with the constancy of the sum of energy, a continuous infringement of the law. Its activity is of a distinct kind not interchangeable with any form of material energy of heat, motion, electricity and the rest.

(3) No thinking man can reject the principle of causality as demonstrated in metaphysics, where it is proved that this principle is derived from the mind's own activity and its immediate experience of exerting real influence on bodily movements. Therefore the relation of cause and effect between the mental and the material cannot be denied. What we deny is the applicability of the conservation of energy to living, sentient conscious beings (n. 26).

(4) There is more than one answer to the fourth objection. In the first place it is found to rest on an entirely gratuitous assumption, which is as follows: "The intervention of any act of free will must necessarily be transformed into a creation of energy, thereby disturbing its constancy in the world." This statement is flatly contradicted by experience, for there are many modes of activity on the part of free will, which prove that man's soul and its faculties are not subject to the exigencies of that Law. Moreover, mathematicians of the highest renown, such as Clerk Maxwell, Lord Kelvin, Preston, Carbonelle and others do not admit that we ought, on account of that law, to eliminate from the field of action all immaterial beings. When a principle leads to absurd conclusions, it must be radically wrong.

The following remarks will further explain the true concept of liberty, and suggest principles available for the solution of difficulties. (1) There can be no real conflict between the dispositions of Divine Providence and the liberty of man, and this for several weighty reasons. Almighty God, in pre-

establishing from all eternity the universal order of the world, prearranged all things according to their nature, so that all should coöperate towards its execution, the necessary causes, necessarily and the free causes freely. Man, by an abuse of his liberty, may, alas! depart from some particular divine order, e.g., by breaking some of God's commandments, but it is not in his power to frustrate the carrying out of the universal order of God's Providence, to which man's abuse of his liberty is likewise subject. The sinner may, as far as it depends on him, deviate from the order of the divine will by his transgression, but, by so doing, he cannot impede the execution of the universal order, which is as follows: Whoever refuses to glorify God's wisdom, goodness and mercy by free obedience, besides forfeiting heavenly happiness, will, owing to his rebellion, glorify His justice and omnipotence by endless punishment. (St. Thomas, "Summa," I, q. 19, a. 6.)

(2) A special difficulty urged by Determinists is the following: Man's election or choice is necessary, unavoidable, for he cannot subtract himself from the action of the first moving cause, the divine will.

We answer that the assertion is rejected as being absolutely false. For the human will, though moved by God as primary cause, yet retains the full liberty of its acts. As divine action does not change the power of secondary causes, with which it coöperates or concurs, so neither does it change the intrinsic nature of the acts performed by that power. The contrary opinion is heretical, as it does away with the merit, or demerit of man's free acts and entirely subverts the principles of the moral order. To quote the words of the Angelic Doctor (Summa, I, q. 19, a. 8): "God is the first Cause moving both natural (necessary) and voluntary (rational) causes: and as in moving the natural causes He does not prevent their acts from being natural, so in moving voluntary causes neither does He impede their actions from being voluntary, as He operates with His creatures according to their properties."

(3) The controlling power of man's will over his own acts excludes all determination either intrinsic or extrinsic, a fact

that makes us complete masters of our doings, and free workers of our destiny.

(4) Two kinds of goods are proposed by the intellect to the will, that which is perfect good, complete happiness and all other finite goods. As the former is fully proportioned to the voluntary faculty, and capable of entirely gratifying its aspirations, it does not allow us any freedom but necessarily moves us to will it. Hence man's natural yearnings after perfect happiness, implanted by the Creator, are not voluntary but necessary. On the contrary, all limited particular goods, though more or less enticing, yet leave the will free either to accept or to reject them (St. Thomas, "De veritate," 22).

(5) Among the works, which Determinists have undertaken to accomplish through their theory, is the rehabilitation before the world of all classes of criminals. According to their patrons, abuse of liberty has nothing to do with the record even of their most hideous crimes, as this is due exclusively to their hopeless, degenerate physiological and anatomical temper, which necessarily compels them to the performance of irresponsible acts. According to this view, thieves, burglars, murderers, brutal violators of innocent victims are not criminals but sickly and unhappy mortals. On this principle all civil tribunals, state prisons, death penalties and all criminal codes of the whole civilized world ought to be abolished as iniquitous in the extreme degree. That advocates of such absurd and immoral theories should be found in cultured Europe and America is as dishonorable to mankind as it is unfortunately true. It is owing to the prevalence of such insane views, that the execution of criminals of the blackest dye is denounced as legalized murder. To this class belong also some newspaper writers who in their editorials inspired by maudlin, feminine sympathy describe hanging and electrocution as barbarous, forgetting the cold-blooded, cruel doings of the murderer against their victims, which a short time before their own papers had so vividly recounted.

The leading schools of Determinism, as opposed to the doctrine of man's free will, are reduced to three, whose principles are here abridged and refuted.

(1) *Theological Determinism.* According to it free will is incompatible with the providential dispositions of God and the divine foreknowledge of man's future actions.

Answer. This error proceeds from a false idea of divine providence, as it confounds infallibility with necessity. Foreknowledge in God is only an anticipated view of future events. What is to come will happen infallibly as foreseen, but not necessarily: it will not happen because it was foreseen: but it was foreseen because it was to happen (n. 48). Knowledge in God neither creates nor influences its object; it merely knows it such as it is; if it is a necessary event, it knows it as necessary: if it is free, it knows it as a free event. When the question is asked how can men's future acts, which do not yet exist, be present to the divine Mind? The only rational explanation given by the majority of Catholic theologians is that the determining principle of the divine knowledge can only be within God Himself, who sees the occurrence of future free acts in His will to cause them to exist according to their free mode. In fact the Divine intellect cannot possibly draw its knowledge from any other source than the divine essence, the supreme and ultimate cause of all things. It is therefore a certain fact that God knows and foresees man's future free actions, leaving their nature untouched. If they come to pass freely, His infallible knowledge sees them take place freely. (See "Manual of Scholastic Philosophy," by Cardinal Mercier, II, pp. 105–107.)

(2) *Psychological Determinism* claims that the will is compelled to act in the presence of the strongest motive presented to it by the intellect.

Answer. Experience proves exactly the opposite, for by the exercise of free will man can make the weaker become the stronger motive. The will is looked upon as a blind faculty, for it cannot be moved toward any goods unless the goods themselves are made known to it by the intellect, hence the saying, *Nihil volitum nisi præcognitum* (there can be no wish for a thing unknown). It is the function of the intellect to perceive a variety of goods: but it belongs to the will to make the choice. As Professor Romanes writes: "Although it is

true that volitions are caused by motives, yet it is the mind which conditions the motives, and therefore its own volitions." As another writer tells us: "The free man is he, who can control himself, who does not obey every idea as it occurs to him, but weighs and determines for himself, and is not at the mercy of external influences. This is the real meaning of choice and free will." (Sir Oliver Lodge, "Substance of Faith," p. 27.)

(3) *Physiological Determinism.* Heredity and environment so far impair man's freedom as to make him irresponsible. Dr. Maudsley declares that "there is a destiny made for a man by his ancestors, and no man can elude the tyranny of his organization." Professor Tyndall writes: "My physical and intellectual structures were woven for me, not by me. Processes, in which I had no share, have made me what I am. If finally our motives and wishes determine our actions, in what sense can these actions be said to be the result of free will?" (Fragments of Science.)

To all this Dr. Fairbairn replies with lucidity: "What a man inherits leaves him still a free man. The judgment he has to bear is for his own act, not for the acts of his ancestry, even though they may have created in him tendencies, which are not easily resisted: these tendencies do not cancel freedom, they only condition it; they define the limit of responsibility, they do not annul it; for its ground stands unbroken." (The Philosophy of the Christian Religion, p. 77.) If our acts were predetermined, if we merely transmitted the push of the whole past, how could we be praised or blamed for anything? Moreover, so long as the arguments alleged to establish freedom, particularly the chief one drawn from the testimony of conscience, remain unchallenged, no amount of sophistic verbiage, resorted to by Determinists, can dislodge us from our position. Lastly, should Physiological Determinism, based on heredity, temper and environment, be admitted, what would necessarily follow? Plainly this, that morality is at an end. The philosophical conceptions *I ought, I can, I may, I will,* are expressions of personality, and matters of every day's normal consciousness. A very old authority fully confirms

this truth. The Roman philosopher Cicero (Tuscul. Quæs., I, xxiii, n. 55) writes: "The soul perceives that it is moved, and it perceives, at the same time, that it is moved by its own, not by another power." (*Sentit animus se moveri; quod cum sentit, illud simul una sentit se sua vi, non aliena moveri.*)

We then claim for man what is called liberty of indifference: though he is drawn to seek after happiness in general, yet he remains free in the choice of the means, which he judges to be conducive to that end. To explain still farther the true concept of liberty, we may define it to be: *an endowment, in virtue of which the will, in the presence of a particular good, offered as means of attaining the universal end, happiness in general, is free to choose it or reject it.* A learned French writer on Ethics, whose name I was unfortunately unable to trace, gives an excellent definition of moral liberty as the absence of any prohibition of human acts from a legitimate authority: To be free is to do what one wills, whilst doing what one ought (*Etre libre c'est faire ce qu'on veut, en faisant ce qu'on doit*). Father Taparelli, S.J., in his "Saggio theoretico" (I, n. 47), sums up the argument from the general consent of mankind in behalf of man's liberty as follows: "Every tongue that names virtue and vice, merit and demerit, praise and blame, reward and punishment, approval and remorse: every law that is enacted, every regret that is expressed, every magistrate that is constituted, every judicial sentence that is pronounced, all speak of human liberty and show what is the unanimous judgment of the whole civilized world on the freedom of man."

The foregoing proofs justify us in drawing the following conclusions:

(*a*) Free Will cannot be denied without rejecting some of the fundamental truths, which form the basis of ethical science, such as man's accountability to God for his personal conduct.

(*b*) Liberty is safely entrenched in an unconquerable fortress, the conviction of the whole human race, which guarantees its absolute certainty. As Cicero, the famous Roman

philosopher said: "That, on which all men are agreed, must be true." (De natura deor., I, 17.)

(*c*) All men whether civilized or barbarian, believe in the distinction between actions that are intrinsically good and those that are intrinsically evil, which distinction constitutes the very foundation of morality and criminal jurisprudence. Abolish the liberty of the human agents, from whom those actions proceed, and that essential distinction or difference disappears.

(*d*) It is granted that man's will is induced to act only by the presence of some good, which operates as a motive. It is, however, distinctly understood that it is one thing to be influenced by a motive, and quite another thing to be necessarily determined by it. Influence, even if greatly intensified, is not to be confounded with compulsion.

(*e*) In the matter of God's foreknowledge of man's doings we must carefully distinguish antecedent from consequent necessity. When an act of whatever nature is posited, it becomes a necessary, metaphysically true fact, for the simple reason that a thing, or fact, cannot be said to be (to exist) and not to be (not to exist) at the same time.

Therefore such a fact necessarily exists. But there are two kinds of necessity affecting human activities. If necessity is brought to bear on the faculty before the performance of the act or simultaneously with it, we have what is called *antecedent necessity,* which evidently excludes freedom. Such are all the instinctive acts of irrational creatures, and some acts of man himself, if done spontaneously without voluntary deliberation. The actions, for instance, of a man fully distracted, dreaming, or insane. Moral theologians call them the acts of man, *actus hominis,* to distinguish them from moral acts, *actus humani,* their opposite. On the other hand, if other acts, which also necessarily exist, when once done, have been performed freely, deliberately, they exist by what is named *consequent necessity,* which is fully compatible with the freedom of the agents, because they do not precede but follow the acts in question.

(*f*) Cardinal Newman wisely said: "Ten thousand diffi-

culties do not make a doubt,'' a saying rightly applied to any truth that has been rationally demonstrated, such as the doctrine of free will, an experimental fact, the indispensable basis of moral science, and the justification of all criminal codes.

(*g*) Man knows and is convinced that he degrades himself by yielding to his lower appetites; that, by his free will he can summon courage and strength to overcome them, and to strive after that higher and lasting good, which his intellect apprehends. If, therefore, man has the power of resisting and overcoming sensible tendencies, the sensitive faculties cannot possibly be the source of this power, since no force can act in opposition to the principle from which it springs, the soul, the root and cause of all activity in man.

It has been remarked that several among the defenders of Determinism, in defining the law of the conservation of energy, manage to formulate it so that it may meet their case, namely direct opposition to human liberty. Such gratuitous definitions, as long as they are found to be contrary to truth, deserve no reply. But let us see how this same law is stated by Clerk Maxwell, an authority which is paramount in this matter, and which the Determinists themselves cannot reject. He expresses it as follows: ''The total energy of any body or system of bodies is a quantity which can neither be increased nor diminished by *any mutual action of those bodies,* though it may be transformed into any one of the forms of which energy is susceptible.'' (Encyclopædia Britannica, art. Energy.) Such is the law. Now can we say that the inherent activity of our intellect, or of our will, is an action of those bodies which are comprised within our present cosmic system? By no means, unless we hold that matter alone exists. (See Holaind, ''Natural Law and Legal Practice,'' p. 115.) Therefore, immaterial, spiritual substances, such as the human soul and its faculties, are not subject to that law.

From these replies the reader can easily see that the trumped up objection against man's liberty, which the Determinists derive from the so-called theory of the Conservation of Energy, is not so formidable after all, and upon close ex-

amination falls harmlessly to the ground, *tamquam imbelle telum sine ictu,* like a feeble weapon missing its aim.

Before concluding this subject, we must call the reader's attention to a novel view of human liberty, which, if acted upon, would open the way to unbridled license, and sanction the perpetration of the most awful crimes. According to this view the civil courts should take no notice even of the gravest moral disorders and impious deeds, so long as they are not such as to interfere with the welfare and liberty of others. The advocates of this abominable theory belong to the so-called school of modern thought. Let us allege the testimony of three among the most influential—Kant, Herbert Spencer and S. Mill. They all claim full liberty for every man to do whatever he pleases, to break every commandment of the Decalogue, so long as no one else is made to suffer by it. Kant says: "Everyone may seek his own happiness in the way that seems good to himself, provided that he infringe not the freedom of others." Herbert Spencer expresses himself thus: "Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided that he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man." Mill says the same thing in other words: "The only part of the conduct of anyone, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others." Of course, the defenders of this new morality do not reckon on God's judgment. But will this free them and their deluded disciples from their accountability before the Supreme Judge? If our readers will ponder well on the true idea of man's liberty as stated above (n. 67) and in Part VII, ch. iv, there will be no danger of their judgment being perverted by the false theories and gratuitous assumptions of modern scientists.

CHAPTER II

SPIRITUALITY OF THE HUMAN SOUL

§ I. Preliminary Notions

94. The question of the nature of the human soul, its simplicity, spirituality, and essential distinction from the

body, which it animates, is a fundamental, philosophical truth of the highest import, for with it is bound up the doctrine of a future life, as well as the chief purpose of man's existence upon earth. We may define the soul to be the ultimate, internal principle by which we think, will and feel, and by which are originated all the body's vital activities. Such principle, as shown in the sequel, is not extended, composite or intrinsically dependent on the body. If there be a life after death, a truth taught both by faith and reason, the agent of our vital actions, being capable of existing in itself, can also have, after death, an existence separate from the body. Hence the two essential attributes of the soul, its spirituality and immortality.

The teaching of Catholic philosophy on the soul is based on the doctrine of St. Thomas and may be thus summarized:

(1) The rational soul, which is one with the vegetative and sensitive principle, is the form of the body, the cause of its life and functional activities. (Enchiridion, p. 210.)

(2) It is a spiritual substance endowed with a natural aptitude and exigency for union with and existence in the body, forming with it the substantial compound, man, who is two and one, a divisible but a vital unity.

(3) Though connaturally related to the body the soul in its higher operations of intellect and will is essentially independent of that corporal organism.

(4) The rational soul produced by a special creative act by its Maker is infused into the human embryo at the first moment of its formation.

Such is the Catholic doctrine on the nature, unity, substantiality and origin of man's soul. It is the only system consistent with Christian truth and morals, and it is diametrically opposed both to materialism and monism, which logically and inevitably undermine all the principles of religion and ethical teachings.

This soul, the cause of all vital acts in man's life, as certainly exists within us, as it is certain that we live, feel, think and will. That such a being, as we described above, cannot be corporeal or material is made clear by the following consideration, to be soon developed at greater length: A cor-

poreal, material being can be seen, touched, weighed or measured, whereas no one can see, touch, weigh or measure thought, feeling, will, or the hidden agent producing them. Therefore, the soul, from which they proceed, cannot be corporeal or material. This reason is based on the metaphysical axiom—*Operatio sequitur esse*—that is, the acts of a being are always proportionate to the essence, capacity and faculties of that being. Hence follows the logical conclusion: spiritual acts such as thoughts, volitions, reasoning, springing from the soul prove that the soul itself, their originator, must be spiritual, since all effects are proportionate to their cause.

The same truth can be confirmed by this reflection. All that is corporeal, material is subject to continual changes. In fact, physiological scientists assure us that, in the course of a few years, the constituents of our body are completely changed; but, as proved by the testimony of conscience, the soul, the identical Ego, is wholly unaffected by any change, remaining substantially the same in childhood, youth, manhood, and old age.

We speak of plants, beasts and men as living. Shall we then believe that in all living things, constituting the vegetable, the animal and the human kingdoms there is the same life, and consequently the same soul? No, such a belief would be a gross mistake and would abolish the different degrees of excellence established among creatures by their sovereign Creator. Before pointing out in detail the relative differences among the three kingdoms of living beings, we must recall a general principle which at once separates man from the two kingdoms below him, and places him on the highest pinnacle of glory as the earthly king of creation. St. Paul, quoting the royal psalmist (8, 5), thus writes of man in his address to the Lord: "*Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels: Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, and hast set him over the works of Thy hands. Thou hast subjected all things under his feet.*" (Heb. 2, 7-8.) The nature of a being is known by its faculties, and these faculties by their acts and the objects which they are fit to reach. All admit that man's soul is capable of forming intellectual cognitions and moral

resolutions, essentially superior to all the functions of the material, sensitive organism, on which account these operations are deservedly called spiritual. Now it stands to reason to say that spiritual operations can proceed only from spiritual faculties, and these faculties cannot but reside in a spiritual subject, the soul, to which they belong. We are then justified in concluding that the human soul, in as much as it is endowed with intelligence and will, is a spiritual substance possessing a subsistence and life entirely independent of the body and immeasurably superior to all living creatures of this world. (St. Thomas, "Summa," I, q. 75, a. 1.) Examining now the three classes of living beings in detail we say: (1) Plants certainly live, but their vital acts, destitute of all locomotion, are restricted to these three functions, nutrition, growth and reproduction. Being stripped of sensation and its organs plants essentially differ from animals, and occupy the lowest grade in the category of living beings.

(2) Next higher in the scale of living creatures are animals. They likewise live, they possess sensitive, organic faculties, which enable them to perceive material things; but they lack intelligence as proved by their absolute incapacity of any progress; hence the reason of their stationary condition, which remains unchanged from their creation to this day. When they tell us that many actions of brutes manifest design, intelligent adaptation of means to ends, we answer: that is true, but the design is not in the animal; it is in Him Who made the animal and endowed it with instinct. This is a natural, spontaneous property or impulse that moves animals to actions that are essential to their existence, propagation and preservation. The brute soul is irrational, incapable of tending to any end beyond the unconscious functions of its earthly existence; hence the brute soul ceases to live when its material organism is rendered unfit for the actions of animal life. As they are irrational and wholly mortal, no further end is held out to them. Their task was ended with their services to man.

(3) Then there is the third and highest degree of life on earth, the life of man endowed with personal intelligence enabling him to form universal concepts and reaching essentially

spiritual things, such as the idea of God, of truth, virtue, beauty, etc., entirely inaccessible to the animal creation (n. 174). The late distinguished physicist, John Tyndall, though a materialist, in a lucid moment was frank enough to say: "The chasm that separates psychical (spiritual) facts from material phenomena is intellectually impassable." (Catholic Encyclopedia, XIV, 156.)

The preceding arguments and those to follow are amply sufficient to differentiate man from the lower animals. To those who think with Darwin that man's faculties differ from those of the brute not in kind but only in degree, we suggest for their reflection the following contrast.

"Man," says Darwin, "is descended from a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in its habits, and an inhabitant of the old world." ("Descent of Man," II, p. 389.) "Let man examine," writes Buffon, the famous French naturalist, "analyze, and deeply scrutinize himself, and he will soon recognize the nobility of his being; he will feel the existence of his soul, and cease to lower himself; he will not fail to perceive the immense distance, which the Creator has placed between man and the beast." (Zoology.)

The degrading doctrine that claims man's descent from the ape species, be it a gorilla or an orang-utang, was clearly predicted by the prophet David when he wrote: "*Man, when he was in honor, did not understand; he hath been compared to senseless beasts and made like to them.*" (Ps. 48, 21.)

95. The chief difficulty against the spirituality of man's soul is based on what physiologists claim to be a necessary dependence of the intellect in all its operations on the action of the brain. The general answer is that the soul does indeed require bodily organs for the exercise of some of its functions as a *condition;* but not as a *cause* of its intellectual acts. This difficulty was forestalled by St. Thomas, who put to himself this question: "How can the soul be independent and self-subsistent, if its operations stand in need of bodily organs?" His answer is substantially as follows: The intellectual faculties depend, no doubt, on corporeal organs, chiefly

on the brain, but only in so far as it is needed to supply material, images, phantasms, on which the soul works, abstracting from material things and apprehending universal truths, for without sensitive organs the mind, in the present state of union with the body, could not be put in communication with the external world, and receive thereby its impressions. The brain therefore is requisite to the action of the intellect, but not as an organ exercising the act of intelligence, of which it is naturally incapable. (Summa, I, qq. 84–85.)

The preceding answer may be further explained by familiar examples. When all the parts of musical instruments are in good condition, harmony is the result. But all will say that it is the musicians that produce the tune, not the piano, harp or violin employed by them. Again, telegraphic communications cannot be established without a simultaneous chemical process in the battery, but the message delivered through the wire, the contents of the telegram cannot be regarded as a function of the electro-chemical process. This holds with still greater force of the relation of thought to the brain. In the illustrations alleged the material factors, such as the musical instruments and the electric current are the *condition*, not the *efficient cause* of the effects produced. The same must be said of the influence of the brain; it is simply the condition required for the normal activity of the intellect, but it is not, by any means, the cause producing intellectual acts, which can come only from an intelligent, spiritual agent, the soul (nn. 108, 109).

The supreme Pontiff Pius IX (June 9, 1865) condemned materialists in the following terms: "They recognize none but material forces. Their whole system of morals and their aim in life consist in the acquisition of riches and all that subserves their sensual passions; and by their evil and abominable principles they shelter, defend and justify all fleshly lusts, which war against the spirit (the soul), ascribing to them so-called natural rights, which, as they assert, are infringed by the laws of the Church."

The same destructive error was proscribed by a decree of the Vatican Council held in the year 1870. The absurd and

detestable consequences, to which the profession of rank materialism inevitably leads, are unblushingly admitted by the German author Heine, who writes: "Not renunciation! It is pleasure, the dances of the nymphs, Nectar and Ambrosia, that we demand. Would that the World had never believed in a God! Then we should have been happier." (Hettinger, I, p. 185, note.)

§ II. Adversaries

96. Materialism is an old error. We need not stop to trace its history; it will be sufficient that we cursorily mention its diverse forms.

1. According to the gross conception of *old materialists* the human soul is simply a kind of flame, or vapor, or a very subtile thin shadow. It would seem that the inspired writer of the book of Wisdom (ch. ii, 1-8) has described by anticipation this class of materialists.

2. According to *modern materialists* the soul is nothing else but a kind of label, a collective noun designating the sum or combination of all the functions of the nervous system. It is not distinguished from the material organism, but forms one thing with it. To quote one instance out of many, Karl Vogt, a leader of contemporaneous materialism, speaks out his mind bluntly in the following words: "The soul is not an immaterial principle distinct from the body, neither can it be called a principle; but it is a kind of collective noun intended to designate the different functions pertaining to the nervous system or to the center of the nervous system, the brain. Man, therefore, like all the inferior animals, the brute creation, is simply a machine; thought is only the result of a certain organization."

As to thought, the physiologist Cabanis (1757-1808) looked upon it as a secretion or a product of the brain, just as bile is derived from the liver. It is gratifying, however, to learn that he retracted this error. In our days, the materialists maintain that thought, mind, intelligence, in short, man's reasoning faculty is simply the result of vibrations in the brain, a phenomenon caused by molecular movements.

97. Remark. We cannot be too careful in guarding ourselves against certain recent theories, which, under the name of spiritualism, ill disguise a rank materialism. We must also entirely separate our cause from that of the *exaggerated spiritualists* of the Cartesian school, who err not by default, but by excess, as they attribute to the soul not only thought but also material sensation, thus confounding man's soul with the animating, vivifying principle of the lower animals.

§ III. Proofs of the Spirituality of the Human Soul

First Proof—Liberty

98. If there be an incontestable and universally admitted truth it is this, that *matter cannot be free.*

(*a*) The fundamental principle of mechanical determinism consists precisely, as we have seen (nn. 67, 93), in extending and applying to man, to the whole of man, soul and body, the *necessary* laws of physics and mechanics.

(*b*) The main avowed purpose, that materialists have in view in attacking the spirituality of the human soul, is to stamp out the very idea of *human liberty.* None of them will ever consent to admit the existence of a material soul, but endowed with true liberty and moral responsibility.

(*c*) The fundamental axiom of physics, upon which the whole structure of that science is built, is the quality of *inertia,* in virtue of which, matter cannot move except under the impulse of an external force.

(*d*) The gratuitous and absurd hypothesis of free matter, contrary, as it is, to all the known laws of matter, destroys altogether the scientific import of materialism; a system pretending to explain all the phenomena of the Universe by a slow, gradual, irresistible evolution *of matter.* Its advocates boast of having established by this process the unity of all the forces of nature.

These statements being premised, we see springing from them an argument as simple as it is irrefutable. We reason thus:

The human soul is *free*—we have proved it (nn. 65-83); so

free, indeed, as to possess the power of resisting the most enticing inducements, and directing its activity according to its pleasure. Now, matter is not free; therefore, the human soul, being endowed with liberty, is not material, it is spiritual.

Second Proof—Immortality

99. Note. Though the immortality of the human soul can be deduced from its spirituality, nevertheless, as we shall see further on (nn. 110-122), it can be demonstrated by arguments entirely independent of that consideration. Therefore, we do not incur the sophism of the vicious circle, if we here argue from the soul's immortality, as duly established in the proper place, to its spirituality.

Here is the argument: The soul is immortal. After death, after the total dissolution of the bodily organism, it continues to exist, and receives from its Maker and Judge the reward or punishment due to its works.

Now, can this soul, distinct from and surviving the body, be material? No, by no means.

Who can admit the irrational and absurd materialistic explanations of life and of thought through the sole physico-chemical forces of the organism, explanations grounded on the supposition that life and thought result from another kind of matter distinct from the bodily organism? None of our opponents will venture to hold this hypothesis, which is, moreover, found to be absolutely untenable. In fact, no one can hold it without incurring the absurdity of endowing a new and imaginary kind of matter with the properties of spirits; such as indivisibility, incorruptiblity, responsibility, etc.

Third Proof—Intellectual and Voluntary Life

100. The preceding proofs, though indirect, might suffice Yet to strengthen our position, we deem it advisable to examine those also that are derived, in a more direct manner, from the operations of the soul. In these acts or operations, which all men call thoughts and wishes, are revealed properties absolutely irreconcilable with the constitution of matter.

Let us now proceed to examine separately both our intellectual and our voluntary acts.

A. Intellectual Acts

101. *Preliminary remark.* **Sensitive Cognition.**

To seize well on the true idea of the immateriality of intellectual cognition, let us first cast a glance at *sensitive* cognition.

1. Without stopping to consider the *external senses,* from which we make abstraction at present, let us notice that (*a*) all the perceptions of sight, hearing, touch, etc., evidently pertaining to pure sensibility, are *compound* and *divisible.* Thus I may plunge my hand into a vessel of water; I may withdraw it half way from the bottom. I may gradually intercept the sight of a picture or any other object by means of a screen; in short, I can divide my sensations, for they are actually made up of parts, and therefore *divisible.* (*b*) These same sensations are not like *universal ideas,* the product of intellectual perception and abstraction (n. 94), but they are things altogether individual, particular, concrete; thus I see *this* object; I hear *this* or *that* determined sound. (*c*) They are produced by *material excitation,* and they consequently vary according to its different forms and degrees. The sense of vision varies according to the angle, to the light or the position from which an object is viewed; hearing is modified according to the distance from which the sound is heard, and the medium of its transmission. (*d*) The degree or quantity of impressions of which each organ is capable, is restricted within certain *limits;* hence hearing is injured by too loud a sound or noise; sight may be lost by excessive light, etc.

2. *Imagination* forms in us interior representations similar to external sensations, *ex. gr.,* of motions, colors, sound, words, etc. These *cerebral images,* which materialists pretend to assimilate to ideas or intellectual concepts, must be reckoned as belonging to the order of sensations. They have the organ producing them, the brain; they are localized; made up of parts; they depend for their activity on the excitation of the nervous centre, etc. These are properties admitted by all the

physiologists and psychologists; properties, at all events, so essential to organic actions, that it is impossible to call in question what we have just asserted without transforming the imagination into a spiritual faculty, as it was actually done by Descartes.

We are now prepared to see the radical opposition that there is between cerebral images and immaterial ideas.

102. This is our reasoning in brief:

All organic phenomena are essentially compound, received in organs endowed with extension, are depending for their presence and action on material excitation; we have just demonstrated it, and all our adversaries are agreed on this point.

But experience exhibits in man acts of knowledge that are simple, that is, not made up of parts, abstract, independent of all material excitation. Therefore, these acts of cognition cannot be organic; consequently they are spiritual, rational, intellectual.

It remains now for us to prove the existence of acts that are truly intellectual, simple, abstract and independent of all material excitation.

These acts are ideas, judgments, reasonings.

103. **1. Ideas.** Every cognition presents a double aspect: it is a phenomenon, an *operation of the subject* knowing; and the representation of an *object*. Hence we may consider apart both the *object* and the *manner* in which it is represented.

That our knowledge has for its *object* not only material realities, but also beings manifestly spiritual, such as God, angels, human souls, etc., is a well-established fact. This fact, however, would not be sufficient of itself to demonstrate the spirituality of the thinking principle. It is necessary for us to prove the immateriality of ideas considered as acts. To accomplish this, let us examine their characters, or the distinguishing marks which they contain.

(*a*) Ideas are *universal*. For instance, besides the brain-image representing to me a tree, a horse, a house, a man, I perceive the idea or constituent elements of a tree, a horse, a house, a man in general, as applicable to an indefinite number of similar objects. The universal idea then expresses a note or

notes common to many objects, found in each of them, no matter how much those objects may differ in other respects. Thus the terms animal and rational, are notes common to all men. They are conceived in the universal idea "man," and each of them corresponds to a universal idea.

This idea, whose universality or universal applicability is known to me, is not, as some of our adversaries maintain, a limitless, indefinite, confused image; but, though general, it stands out in all its clearness and precision. Now, an idea, conceived as something universal, cannot be an organic image, a material image; and the reason is plain. An organic image, as we have seen, is compound, something consisting of parts, and limited to a determined form.

For this idea to be *universal,* and applicable, for instance, to *all* the trees, it should represent *simultaneously* the form, the dimensions of *all* possible trees, the beech trees, the oaks, the pines, etc. The universal image of *color,* that it may be extended and applied to all the *colors,* should likewise possess simultaneously and in all its extent, all the imaginable shades. But this is absurd. For, first of all, an image cannot be, at the same time, all green, and red, and blue; and also because the perception and color vibrations of the blue are quite different from the perception and vibrations of the red. We may reason in the same manner as to the idea of *sound in general;* if it were an organic image, it should represent simultaneously *all* the sounds, and have the same number of vibrations for all the notes.

Let us recall the example or illustration already mentioned (n. 95), the idea of a triangle in general. If this idea, instead of being an *intellectual concept,* susceptible of the greatest possible generalization, were an *organic image,* it should be limited within some fixed dimension; but then it would at once become only *one* given and determined triangle, stripped of all generalization. In order to represent *all* the triangles, that image ought to be simultaneously circumscribed by all possible measures and dimensions, what is evidently impossible and absurd. This same reasoning can be easily applied to all the universal ideas of *material* objects. And what shall we say of

the ideas expressing or representing moral and spiritual beings, such as goodness and wickedness, virtue and vice, God, Angels, human souls, etc.? And what of the so elementary idea in geometry of the *unextended* point? And the idea of the infinite, which, in the judgment of the illustrious scientist, Pasteur, in his address, when admitted to the French Academy (n. 14), is sufficient to refute the system of Positivism, is it also a compound image, consisting of many parts?

(*b*) Ideas are realities altogether *independent of material sensation.* It is a well-known fact that all organic functions vary acording to the different impressions, activities and state of the organs of sensation. But the contrary happens with regard to our ideas; for they are presented to our mind as something immovable, unchangeable and permanent. Sensitive impressions may vary indefinitely; images clear or blunt, far or near, may be successively formed; but the ideas of duty, of truth, of justice never vary; they remain identically the same.

104. **2. Judgments and Reasoning.** For brevity's sake we will only refer to the judgments which express truths or principles that are absolute, necessary, unchangeable, eternal. For instance: "A thing cannot be and not be at the same time; the whole is greater than any of its parts; nothing exists without sufficient reason."

Here shines in all its splendor the absolute independence of all material impression; those self-evident truisms present nothing conditioned, nothing variable, nothing transitory.

What immense difference, for instance, between the principle of sufficient reason (n. 26), always clear, peremptory, indivisible, unalterable, and the remembrance of a person that may have been met before! This latter image is gradually effaced, changed or even blotted out entirely, or becomes mixed and confused with other images bearing some resemblance to it. And why so? Simply because it is a material cognition, riveted, so to speak, to the brain, and subject to the vicissitudes of that organ. And why, on the contrary, does the principle of sufficient reason remain unchangeable, if not because it is the direct product of a faculty free from organic influences,

acting only under the impulse of its natural tendency to truth, and sharing, in some degree, the purity, simplicity and stability of eternal Truth itself?

B. Voluntary Acts

105. These acts supply us with other arguments.

First Argument: *Liberty.* All our free acts, from the fact that they are not subject to the conditions of matter, suffice to demonstrate the existence in ourselves of an immaterial principle (n. 98). In fact all effects must be proportionate to the cause producing them; and nothing can be found in the former, which is not in some manner contained in the latter (n. 42). As then we recognize in ourselves the presence of endless free acts, all originated from an immaterial faculty, their cause, which is the soul, must also be immaterial, and therefore spiritual (n. 98).

Another consideration will lead us to the same conclusion.

106. **Second Argument**: *The tendency of the human soul toward immaterial good.* Man can desire and will goods, which he knows to be absolutely immaterial. He can, and in some cases he ought to sacrifice all *sensible* goods, nay, life itself, for the sake of honor, virtue or duty. Here let us understand well that it is question of a preference given to duty as such and to virtue as such, viz., inasmuch as it is an attachment to real duty and real virtue, and not for any other primary consideration. For in this matter there is danger of ambiguity or misunderstanding. The attainment of *spiritual* goods often carries along with it advantages of a purely *material* or temporal order; thus, honor may be accompanied by external manifestations of respect; the practice of moral duty may produce a salutary influence on health, etc. An unreflecting mind may, therefore, imagine that the pursuit of honor, of virtue, is in itself desirable on account of benefits accruing to sensitive faculties. Nothing is farther from the truth. It is duty as such, and independently of all temporal advantage, that is sought after by a truly virtuous man.

Secondly. Man rejoices in the possession of immaterial goods.

But if there were nothing in him but matter, such tendency and such enjoyment would be radically impossible.

In fact, an object is desirable and lovable, inasmuch as it is *good for him* who seeks it. What is immaterial, spiritual, cannot as such produce any gratification or pleasure in a being that is merely sensitive; it cannot be said to be good *for it.* Hence man's tendency or aspiration to immaterial goods cannot be accounted for without admitting in him an element extraneous to matter; in other words, such tendency is inexplicable without the existence and action of a spiritual being, the soul.

This same argument may be briefly stated in the following words. No being can tend to a good which is above its nature, and which it can consequently never attain, as something placed far beyond the reach of its faculties. Now, experience tells us that our soul tends to spiritual goods, such as virtue, honesty, integrity, patriotism, honor, etc., which are essentially above material, organic nature. Therefore, man's soul, capable as it is of aspirations to immaterial, spiritual goods, must itself be spiritual. In other words, this tendency cannot be organic, because of the spiritual nature of its objects. It is, therefore, inorganic, and we legitimately infer that the principle from which it springs, viz., the will, is inorganic also. Thus argues the Prince of Philosophers, St. Thomas Aquinas. (Contra Gentiles, II, 49.)

Additional Proof. Another argument can be drawn from the fact that, whilst the senses cannot reflect on their sensations, the mind, on the contrary, reflects on its own thoughts, and by its self-consciousness, apprehends its own personality, its own indivisible unity, as the central point of all its operations. No extended, material subject is capable of a reflex act. One part of such body may be applied to another part, but it is impossible to superimpose the whole upon itself. Such operation is an exclusive property of spiritual substances. The soul then, which acts in a spiritual way, must itself be spiritual, for all operations of beings are essentially conformable to the faculty, whence they spring. Hence Dante, in his *Divina Commedia,* calls man:

"An individual soul that lives
And feels, and bends reflective on itself."
(Purg., XXV, 76.)

"This is indeed a most important thing to know, that the soul can see itself," that is by reflecting upon itself. (Cicero, "Tusc. disp.," I, xxii.)

Conclusion. We have shown in man the existence of vital, immaterial acts (nn. 103-104). Every effect must have a proportionate cause. Hence, we must admit in man a vital, immaterial principle or cause. This is no other but the soul.

The reader is here referred to Part IV (nn. 171–175), where corroborative proofs of the present thesis are fully developed in the articles on the origin of man and his essential distinction from the lower animals.

§ IV. Objections

107. Preliminary Remarks. **Union of Soul and Body.** The great problem of the union of the soul with the body cannot be solved in this introductory treatise. Nevertheless our answers to objections will gain both force and clearness, if we briefly recall the main results of reason and experience on this subject.

1. The preceding demonstrations, the intimate experience of every one of us, establish beyond all doubt the existence in man of phenomena or effects that are sensitive and organic, as well as the presence of immaterial acts. There must therefore be two distinct principles or causes of those phenomena and acts, one material, the other spiritual.

2. On the other hand, the testimony of experience evidently proves that these two principles are not two distinct individuals, each of them possessing an independent personality, placed in juxtaposition and even penetrating each other, one ruling the other, as the rider controls his horse.

The real fact is that soul and body complete each other, and mutually concur, each in its own sphere, in forming one human nature; the same individual, the same identical person, that has the consciousness of seeing, of hearing, of moving—

all *sensitive* acts—also perceives his *immaterial, spiritual* and *intellectual* acts, such as his thoughts, his wishes, his deliberations, etc. There is nothing more sublime than the general conception of the world, which is furnished by reason and confirmed by Faith. At the foot of the ladder we see inert, senseless matter, which may enter into varied and complex combinations; we next meet vegetative life in all its degrees; higher still we encounter sensitive life, animal creation; then at the very summit of the order of contingent beings, we behold man himself, the king of visible nature, combining in himself all the wonders of inferior natures and acting as the link joining the world of bodies to that of spirits (see Preface); above him are the Angels; and lastly on the highest summit the Infinite Being, the first cause, supreme Ruler and end of all things.

3. This intimate union of body and soul must necessarily produce reciprocal influences between the two constituent elements, the sensible and the spiritual. Under the impulse received from external objects, our organs react, the nervous excitation transmitted to the brain produces therein an internal image. Then it is that the intellectual faculty comes into play and forms ideas, judgments and reasonings.

But a close connection unites the image with the idea, the organic with the spiritual action; the image recalls the idea, and the idea, in its turn, evokes the image. When some lesion in the organ of sensation, some disease, or old age, causes a deterioration in the cerebral center, where the sensible images are stored up, and disturbs the regularity of their associations, through an inevitable reaction, the disorder will interfere with the normal procedure of the intellectual operations.

We are now prepared to hear and refute the principal objections against the spirituality of the human soul.

108. **First Objection.** It is argued by materialists that the intellect cannot be said to be a purely spiritual faculty, for in the exercise of its activity it essentially depends upon the body; in fact, when the latter's organism is injured, for instance, by a severe concussion of the brain, the operations of the former are interfered with, or even at times, entirely prevented.

To this difficulty we answer with St. Thomas, that in such case the action of the intellect is interfered with, not *essentially* and *directly,* but only *accidentally* and *indirectly.* The operations of the intellect, as it has been proved (nn. 102-105) are not exercised through corporeal organs; hence, when such organs are vitiated, its activity is not stopped on that account. However, when some derangement occurs in the organs or in the nervous system, and especially in the brain, the exercise of the organic faculties, such as sensibility, imagination, which depend on those organs, is naturally disturbed. Now, since the integrity of such faculties is required as a condition for the normal operations of the intellect in the present state of union of the soul with the body, for instance to supply it with suitable materials, it happens that the derangement of the organs indirectly interferes with the functions of the intellect, and it is exactly by such interference that we can account for the raving and unconnected reasoning of sick persons subject to intense fever.

109. So long as the soul remains united to the body, it cannot reach the knowledge of exterior things, except through the help of phantasms or ideal images of things supplied from the actions of the sensitive faculties, that are placed in contact with the external world. Hence the sayings of the schoolmen: *Nihil est in intellectu quod prius non fuerit in sensu,* namely, Nothing is in the intellect but what has before been in the senses. *Intellectus noster nihil intelligit sine phantasmate,* that is, our intellect understands nothing without a phantasm or image.

When, therefore, an organic faculty, such as our instruments of sensation, *ex. gr.,* sight, hearing, the nervous and cerebral systems, etc., fails to act normally, the intellect also suffers, not on account of any intrinsic disturbance in its nature, which remains unimpaired, but for want of suitable objects or materials, which can no longer be furnished by the injured faculties of sensation. Give to a Raphael the worst canvas, pencil and colors; or to a Canova a very inferior kind of marble, and no matter how grand their conceptions might be, they will never be able to give them an outward expression

worthy of their genius; and this not on account of defective talent, but rather for want of suitable materials.

110. **Second Objection.** The intellectual faculties are found to be developed and altered with the brain, or even to disappear along with it. Therefore, they are simply functions of the brain. This is the materialists' argument as commonly stated in their works.

Answer. The facts we have alleged to show the intellectual and spiritual activity of the mind are incontestable, and asserted by all the spiritualistic schools. The discoveries of modern science—physiology, medicine, surgery, etc.—have only placed in clearer light the mechanism of the organic functions, leaving untouched and unanswered all the peremptory arguments usually employed in vindicating the spiritual character and nature of the soul as opposed to materialism. So we know more in our days about the structure and convolutions of the brain, about the so-called centers of association of Flechsig, the results of trepanning, etc.

But the objection proves at most, what we freely grant, that the brain is the chief organ of the sensitive faculties, whose function is required as a condition necessary to set in motion the spiritual activity of the soul. And this condition arises from the fact of the intimate union of body and soul in the present life as explained above (nn. 107-108). What would be said of the following manner of arguing, identical with that of materialists? Vegetation, sensation cannot be produced except under certain determined conditions of air, temperature, water, light, etc., and they are altered, deteriorated or even destroyed, if those faculties or conditions are altered, deteriorated or entirely removed. Therefore, vegetation and sensation are produced by the air, the temperature, the light, etc. Would not this be to confound the *condition* with the *cause?* Thus, to bring a familiar illustration, I cannot see objects in the dark; if a light is brought in, shall I say that it is the light that sees the objects and not my eyes? By no means, for the presence of the light is not the *cause*, but only the *condition* of vision. What the light is to the eye, the brain is to the intellect. It is simply the *condition* required

for the normal action of the intellect; but it is not the *cause* of its intellectual operations.

CHAPTER III

IMMORTALITY OF THE HUMAN SOUL

§ I. Preliminary Notions

111. Of all momentous, serious questions that may occupy man's mind in this world, there is none so important in itself and so far-reaching in its consequences as that of his interminable existence beyond the tomb. Immortality, the consolation of the just, and the terror of the wicked, the cornerstone of religion and morality, has been fiercely assailed and denied by many, not because it is not solidly proved, but because some of its opponents, reckless in their moral conduct, dread the awful responsibility which its reality entails in the world to come. Thank God, Divine Providence made ample provision for the preservation of this master-truth among the nations of mankind, to whom their intellectual faculties manifest it. Hence the deeply-rooted conviction of the soul's immortality in the conscience of the human race furnishes one of the strongest refutations of all opponents past, present and future. To the materialists, who flout this doctrine as a sheer delusion and a childish dream, we put this question. If the conviction of the soul's endless existence is nothing but a delusion and a dream, how does it come to be so universal? By what possible means, except from rational dictates, could it become the common property of humanity and the dominating factor in all men's thoughts and aspirations? The real worth of human existence is fully understood when it is looked upon in the light of eternity. It is our solemn duty then to place this truth on a firm foundation, on an impregnable fortress, from which no opposition shall ever be able to dislodge us.

Immortality, that is, endless duration in existence, may belong to a being either *necessarily*, or *miraculously*, or *naturally*.

1. It belongs *necessarily* or *essentially* only to that being,

that is self-existing, whose existence is identical with its essence, and therefore exists by such an necessity of its own nature that its non-existence would involve an absurdity and a contradiction. God alone is such a being, who is, on that account, more properly said to be *eternal,* as His existence has neither beginning nor end (n. 59),

2. Immortality is said to belong *miraculously* to a being, which, being material and compound in its essence, is naturally destined to dissolution, but is preserved in its existence and integrity by a miracle of divine Omnipotence. Such will be the human body after the resurrection, as we learn from Christian revelation, and such was the body of our first parents in the state of innocence, as we are taught by the same authority.

3. Immortality belongs *naturally* to a being, which though contingent, and therefore not existing by necessity of its own nature, yet is so intrinsically constituted that it cannot cease to exist, except through the action of God's omnipotence annihilating it (n. 115). This endless duration belongs to substances that are both simple and spiritual in their essence, such as the human soul, of which we now treat.

Immortality then is not synonymous with eternity (n. 59). for it means a successive duration of a being that has a beginning, but will have no end.

(*a*) Though the chief proofs here adduced are furnished by the dictates of reason, yet, in a treatise of Christian apologetics, we cannot altogether prescind from the doctrine of revealed faith. For, since the fact of divine revelation is established by incontestable evidence by numberless Christian apologists, it becomes a strict duty for all believers to abide by its teachings. In referring, as we shall do, to the decisions of supernatural revelation, we follow the method adopted by a very distinguished philosophical writer, the late Rev. John Joseph Urráburu, S. J., whose eight volumes of "Institutiones philosophicæ" supply a mine of information on the vast subject he has undertaken to discuss. The Catholic Church, identical with historical Christianity, and the only authoritative exponent of God's revealed word, as will be shown in

Parts VI and VII, gives us the following decision on the subject of this chapter. The Fifth General Lateran Council, held in the years 1512–1517, decreed that man's intellectual soul is immortal, and condemned the denial as a most pernicious error.

(*b*) It has been rightly said that for the generality of men the most convincing proof of the soul's immortality, and of its necessary corollary, future, endless retribution, is that deduced from the principles of ethics. Speaking on this subject in his "Emile," Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1778) writes: "Though I had no other proof of the immortality of the soul than the triumph of the wicked and the oppression of the just, this alone would prevent me from doubting it. All will not end here below; order will appear after death."

(*c*) We are here reminded of Solomon's inspired words in Ecclesiastes (3, 16–17): *"I saw under the sun in the place of judgment wickedness, and in the place of justice iniquity. And I said in my heart, God will judge both the just and the wicked."* God being just the future life is a certainty. Facing this question in the concrete we ask: When earthly existence comes to an end, is there to be no difference between the successful swindler and the upright man whom he robbed of his earnings? between the adulterers and the chaste? between the persecutors and the martyrs, their helpless victims? Future, endless retribution is the only key to these problems. Christ, it has been justly said, is the solution of all difficulties. But if, when once this frail thread of conscious life is cut, all is over, then for the vast number of human beings hopeless pessimism is the only creed, and often suicide the most rational practical conclusion.

(*d*) Edmond Scherer, a famous historian, says: "Let us learn to see things as they are: the true, the ancient, the authoritative morality finds its mainstay in God alone. Conscience, like the heart, demands a future life. Duty is nothing, if not made sublime by Faith, and the present life would be a comedy, but for its relation to eternity." (Etudes, vol. VIII.) Plato (347 B.C.) wrote: "If death were the annihilation of the whole man, the wicked would be too great gainers,

being delivered, at the same time, from their bodies, their souls and their crimes. But since the soul is immortal, it has no other means of escaping the evils, which await the wicked, than by learning wisdom and practicing virtue." (De legibus, X.) He meant, of course, in the present life.

(*e*) The particular nature of a being produced is a certain sign of the will of the producer. Thus the Creator made the soul naturally incorruptible, because He wished it to exist for ever. It is unthinkable that God, a most wise, good and provident Ruler, would implant in man's soul yearnings and aspirations for interminable happiness, which its annihilation would render illusory, deceptive and chimerical. Such desires not being satisfied in the present life must find their fulfillment in the next. Any contrary view cannot but be highly derogatory to the Lord's justice, wisdom and goodness.

(*f*) The several reasons alleged in these preliminary remarks, and the arguments to be developed in the sequel, justify us in drawing the following conclusions:

(1) Man's soul is incorruptible, for it does not contain within itself any principle or cause of dissolution, and is intrinsically independent of the body for existence and intellectual action. (2) It is by its nature fitted to outlive the body and its survival is permanent. (3) No created power can reduce it to nothing. (4) God, who alone has the power, will never annihilate it, for He never acts against His free decrees or in opposition to His divine attributes. (5) Therefore the human soul is immortal.

§ II. Adversaries

112. 1. The principal opponents of this truth are, of course, the materialists. According to them, the whole man perishes when the physico-chemical elements constituting the human organism are disintegrated and dissolved by death. In plain language, the great anxiety of the materialists, and the main object of all their efforts, is to strive to persuade themselves and others that there is no such thing as future life with its eternal sanction. It is on this account, and not

for scientific reasons, that they deny human responsibility and the spirituality and immortality of the soul.

2. In the second place, we must mention the partisans or defenders of the so-called voluntary immortality. Their theory consists in this, that man may freely choose either an honest life, to be rewarded by eternal happiness, or a sinful life that will end in nothing, and thus be punished by annihilation. Among the exponents of this absurd theory, we reckon Ch. Lambert in his "System of the Moral World," El. Méric, "The Other Life," I, ch. 5; Prévost-Paradol; Rev. Edward White and others.

§ III. Proofs of the Immortality of the Human Soul

First Proof—The Consent of Mankind

113. With an agreement morally unanimous the human race affirms its belief in immortality. This conviction, supported by numberless testimonies, possesses all the properties characteristic of the infallible judgments of nature (n. 16). To make the judgments of mankind acceptable as channels of truth the following conditions should be verified:

(1) They must be long-standing, constant and common among different nations and peoples.

(2) The progress of science must have confirmed instead of disproving and abolishing them.

(3) They must be conducive to sound morality.

(4) They must not be in conflict with other principles of right reason. Such are the judgments testifying to the truth of the soul's immortality. Now, is it necessary for us to ransack the records of the past and collect the evidence from each individual people? No, by no means. Three distinguished German scholars, Flügel, Knabenbauer, S.J., and Victor Cathrein, S.J., have successfully grappled with that momentous problem, and we are profiting by the results of their investigations. The two former *savants* published the fruit of their labors regarding the nations of antiquity—Assyria, Chaldea, Babylon, Persia, Egypt, the Hebrews, Greece and Rome. The third writer, Victor Cathrein, passes in review all

the peoples and races of our own times, whether civilized or barbarian. The conscientious study of these three historians enabled them to ascertain, among others, the two following truths held at all times, and in all places by the generality of mankind:

(*a*) Belief in the permanent continuance of man's life in a future world, which evidently implies the immortality of the human soul. (*b*) Belief in a future retribution of the just, and punishment of the wicked, most testimonies representing it as interminable.

These statements amply justify the judgment of two ancient writers and one modern author out of the many that might be cited:

Cicero (106 B.C.): "That on which all men are agreed must be true." (De natura deorum, I, n. 17.) "That human souls permanently subsist is the belief of all nations." (Tusc. disp., I, xvi.)

L. Annæus Seneca (A.D. 1): "We are wont to give great weight to what all men are agreed upon; and with us it is an argument of truth that a thing seems true to all." (Epist. 117.) Here is his question and answer on the subject at issue: "Is there anything beyond death? Life, if you desire to die." (Agamemnon, 995.)

Viscount Bolingbroke (A.D. 1751), an unsuspected witness writes: "From the moment that we begin to clear the ground from the chaotic legends of ancient history and mythology, we find the belief in man's future endless existence established on solid evidence in the sentiments and traditions of the oldest nations we are acquainted with." (Quoted by Bergier, "Dictionnaire," I, p. 141.)

Second Proof—Taken from Its Spirituality (nn. 98-110)

We shall successively prove:

1. That the soul is *naturally* immortal.
2. That, as a matter *of fact,* it will actually live forever.

114. **1. The Soul Is Naturally Immortal** (n. 111). In fact all spiritual beings are, by their own nature, immortal;

and this must, therefore, be true of the soul, which, as it has been shown above (nn. 98–110), is a spiritual being.

Spiritual substances cannot suffer death, as they do not contain in themselves any principle or cause of corruption or disintegration, what will evidently appear from the following reflections. A thing may be *intrinsically* destroyed for two reasons: either because it is composed of parts distinct from each other, which when once disconnected or separated, cause the thing itself to perish; or because, though not composed of parts, but simple as the soul of inferior animals, it may depend, like accidents, for the continuance of its existence on something else, which being destroyed or injured, that being itself ceases to be. Now, as we have demonstrated in the preceding chapter, the human soul being a spiritual being does not consist of parts like matter; neither is it an accident depending upon the body for its existence, but is a substantial being.

(*b*) But perhaps the soul once separated from the body will not be able to act; and consequently there being no reason to justify its further existence, it will simply disappear and cease to be.

No, this cannot be; for we have recognized among its faculties operations that are independent of matter; it can think, it can will (nn. 101–107). We may then conclude logically that the soul, being naturally immortal, can survive the body; in other words, it can continue to live even when separated from it by death.

When our adversaries tell us that we ourselves hold that the soul cannot think without the aid of the imagination (n. 108), we reply as follows:

The necessity of the imagination for some mental operations is easily accounted for owing to the union of the soul with the body in the present life; but we see no reason for supposing that the same absolute necessity will continue to exist, even when the soul is separated from its material organism. As the conditions of the soul's existence in the next life are changed, it is but natural that the conditions of its activity should likewise be different.

115. **2. The Soul Will Actually Survive the Body.** This is easily proved, for no cause shall destroy it.

(*a*) *No creature* possesses the power of annihilating the works of the Creator. Here we can invoke the authority of our adversaries themselves, particularly of the scientific men of our days, who lay great stress on the principle that there is no natural force capable of annihilating even one atom of matter (n. 28). When, therefore, the existence of the spiritual soul is once established, we may assert that for stronger reasons (*a fortiori*) the human soul cannot be destroyed by any creature. We say *for stronger reasons,* for if material beings, which can be subjected to the action of both natural and artificial forces, cannot be reduced to nothing, the annihilation of spiritual beings will be still more impossible, as they are placed entirely beyond the reach of those forces.

The following consideration will lead us to the same conclusion. To annihilate a being means to subtract or remove that being from God's preservative action, absolutely required for the continuance of its existence, and reduce it to nothing. But it is plain that no creature, however mighty, can act in opposition to the divine action, prevent the exercise of God's power and thus interfere with the existence of a contingent being. Therefore, no creature whatever can annihilate the human soul, and thus deprive it of its existence.

(*b*) God will not destroy the human soul. In the first place, to create a soul naturally immortal in order to annihilate it, involves a contradiction entirely repugnant to infinite *wisdom;* a contradiction, mind well, that cannot be justified. Nothingness being absolutely useless, annihilation would be an action without a purpose; whilst the soul, if immortal, can attain the last end of creation and always procure the glory of God, either by praising Him in the splendor of eternal beatitude, or by proclaiming His justice in the everlasting abyss of the reprobate (nn. 62, 270). Secondly, the annihilation of the soul is repugnant to the *justice* and *goodness* of God, as it will appear from the following arguments:

Third Proof—Tendency Toward Perfect Happiness

Our reasoning is as follows:

(1) Man naturally tends toward perfect happiness.

(2) Therefore he is destined to enjoy it.

(3) But perfect happiness supposes and requires immortality.

Hence man is immortal.

116. To prove the legitimacy of our conclusion we must establish the truth of each of the three foregoing propositions:

1. Man Naturally Aspires to Perfect Happiness.

(*a*) *Reality of this aspiration.* Man wishes to be happy, and perfectly happy. Doubtless he often deceives himself; he strives to seize phantoms that vanish before his eyes; he eagerly approaches to his lips enticing, but poisoned fruits; he passionately craves after gratifications that will be the cause of his misery; in a fit of despair he may even put an end to his life; yet in all the vicissitudes of his restless career what always impels him to act, what is at the bottom of all his wishes and his vexations and spites, is the desire of happiness, and of *perfect happiness.* So long as this need of his heart is not fully gratified, he is a disappointed man, and endeavors to seek with still greater greed what may completely satisfy him.

117. (*b*) *This aspiration is natural.* The capital point here is to understand well that this tendency toward perfect happiness is not an accidental, casual, irrelevant phenomenon, but an integral part of the *inner nature* of man. Let us observe its characteristic properties. What an astounding difference between that tendency and the thousand particular desires springing up from the human heart!

I. These vary, succeed, and at times replace each other, whilst man's aspiration toward perfect happiness remains *unchangeable, indestructible.* II. Particular desires differ with different individuals; whilst the tendency toward perfect happiness is invariably the same in *all men.* III. Particular desires refer to the *means* leading to happiness; but the natural aspiration we speak of aims at perfect happiness as to

its end. IV. Lastly, the particular desires themselves rest on perfect happiness, as their ultimate foundation and cause.

And if we were to inquire from ourselves what are the motives of our desires, of our actions, of our aspirations; the true answer and last reason would be: "I seek what is good for me; I wish to be happy."

Is it not evident then that a tendency combining in itself such characteristic marks; a tendency that is the beginning and cause of all the others, is, strictly speaking, a *natural* tendency? Hence follows the inevitable conclusion.

118. **2. Man Is Destined to Enjoy Perfect Happiness.**

This irresistible tendency of human nature cannot certainly be an illusion, viz., an aspiration to hopes that can never be realized. Hence, we may without rashness formulate the following dilemma. Either the wisdom and goodness of God are at fault, or man is really destined to enjoy perfect happiness. In fact: (*a*) To create a being, which is, by its own nature, irresistibly impelled toward a definite end, and then to make it impossible for it to attain it, would be a sad contradiction, altogether incompatible with *Divine Wisdom*. (*b*) To frustrate man's most ardent desires, to refuse to satiate the most irresistible aspirations of his nature, would be inflicting upon him the torture of Tantalus, and all this without sufficient, plausible reason, and without fault on the part of man. Would this be reconcilable with God's infinite goodness? (n. 49). Therefore man is created for perfect happiness, and is furnished with the means necessary to enable him to reach and enjoy it. But, we may be asked, where is this perfect happiness to be found, in this world or in the next? Certainly not here below, for reason, revelation and the experience of six thousand years, the most probable period of man's existence upon earth, unite their voices in proclaiming that perfect happiness cannot be found in the present life. Our logical reasoning then justifies us in making a further step and concluding that man's soul is immortal and that perfect ever-enduring happiness is reserved to the just in the life to come, and these are our reasons.

119. 3. **There Can Be No Perfect Happiness without Immortality, that Is Endless Duration.**

Not only do we desire to be happy in one way or another, but we wish to be *perfectly* happy. Our intellect craves after infinite truth; our will yearns after infinite good. Hence, to constitute perfect happiness, a state of life embracing the enjoyment of all goods, three things or conditions are absolutely required.

1. The exclusion of all evils.

2. The possession of every good conformable to our nature.

3. Complete security of never losing such happiness, which last condition is the most essential of all; for if there should be no certainty of the everlasting duration of that happiness, the mere thought of the future loss of heavenly bliss would be sufficient not only to exclude all happiness, but also to cause the most intense grief, a grief proportionate to the immense loss to be incurred. Now, if we deny the immortality of the soul, the three conditions required for perfect happiness would disappear at once. For, first, instead of excluding every evil, one of the greatest evils would be substituted, namely, the cessation of existence. Secondly, to the possession of all goods would succeed the anticipation of their total loss in some future time. Thirdly, the complete security of never losing the enjoyment of happiness would be replaced by the certainty of plunging sooner or later into the abyss of nothing. The preceding argumentation may be thus briefly resumed. The soul of man is immortal, if it can be proved: First, that it can exist, live and act after its separation from the body (n. 114). Second, that it cannot be annihilated by any creature (n. 115). Third, that it will not be annihilated by God, its Creator (n. 115). As the three preceding propositions have been proved, we may logically conclude that the soul of man is immortal. The immortality of the human soul is in perfect harmony with divine justice and wisdom. For whilst, on the one hand, the sure prospect of an interminable, happy life presents to the just a cheering prospect, acting as a motive amply sufficient to enable them, with the help of a divine grace, to curb the most violent passions, and

persevere to the end in the practice of Christian virtue; on the other hand, the divine threat of an endless retribution beyond the grave, offers to the wicked a most potent restraint, capable of deterring them from sin.

In conclusion, if we except on one hand some materialists and infidels, who deny the immortality of the soul, not from any personal conviction of the truth of their tenets, but simply because they endeavor by their denials to remove all moral check and restraint from sin, on the other hand, men of all ages and countries (n. 113), whether civilized or barbarian, unite their voices in proclaiming to mankind this lofty truth, the endless existence of man's soul beyond the tomb. Here it is highly important to remark that the natural aspirations of human reason are fully confirmed by the teachings of Christian Faith. Let the reader recall what has been said above (nn. 61–63), and the doctrine of Jesus Christ concerning the end of man as set forth in Part V of our Apologetics, and he will at once realize the grand, sublime, most consoling truth that God Almighty, through an effusion of His infinite goodness, has actually destined man to a perfect, infinite, eternal happiness in the world to come.

Fourth Proof: Moral Life

120. Preliminary Remark. We have previously demonstrated the following points:

(*a*) That there exists a rule of our free acts, a moral law of which God alone is the author (nn. 5–7).

(*b*) The existence of this law supposes the fact of the liberty and spirituality of the human soul (nn. 65–110).

When these premises are once admitted we can infer that this same moral law imperatively demands the immortality of the human soul.

121. This is our argument. The moral law, to be worthy of the name, must impose an obligation, or a duty, binding man's conscience, and be provided with a sanction capable of enforcing its execution. Now, if we do away with this truth, the immortality of the soul, neither obligation nor sanction

will be any longer possible. Therefore the existence of the moral law inevitably implies the immortality of the human soul.

1. Our first assertion in the foregoing argument is self-evident. For what kind of a law is that which every one may violate with impunity? What will the moral law amount to, if it has no binding force? Now, an obligation that is not furnished with a sanction is illusory; hence the necessity of a sanction that should be efficacious, viz., capable of enforcing the execution of the law, though man, abusing the gift of his liberty, may in spite of it, transgress God's holy law. By so doing he assumes the awful responsibility of his rebellion against the divine law, and consequently will not be able to blame any one but himself for the forfeiture of heavenly happiness and the justly merited infliction of everlasting punishment.

122. **Without Immortality No Moral Obligation Is Possible.**

(*a*) We have explained above (nn. 5–7) what is meant by moral obligation, and what is its necessity. That a human act may present itself to our mind as something morally necessary and binding our conscience, it must offer to us a good of such excellence, that we cannot afford to renounce it, if we intend to secure the attainment of our greatest happiness in the life to come. Now, there is only one good that is capable of realizing those conditions and that is perfect good; good without any mixture of evil. In fact, all the goods containing some imperfections, and such are all the goods that may be found in the present life, leave man's will perfectly free either to accept them or reject them (n. 83); in other words, they are indifferent. Therefore, perfect good, the only one that can constitute the basis of moral obligation, is to be found only in the future life. This good, this happiness of the next world, consisting in the possession of God (n. 55), would become a veritable punishment if it should finally end (n. 119). The conclusion then that logically follows from the preceding premises is that the obligation of the moral law supposes the immortality of the soul of man.

(*b*) *Without immortality there cannot be an efficacious sanction.*

Where is such sanction to be found here below? Is virtue fully rewarded? Do we not see that vice often triumphs with impunity? This sad spectacle, which is frequently a cause of scandal to unreflecting minds, when properly considered, is found, on the contrary, to be a clear indication of the justice that shall be rendered to every one according to his work.

It is, in effect, impossible to suppose that a God infinitely just and good should not render to each one according to his works. To admit the inference of the materialists allowing the wicked to sin with impunity without fear of punishment to come, would be in God an action opposed to His infinite justice, which requires that He should either reward or punish rational creatures according to their deserts. Therefore, the human soul must survive the body after death. And that the soul's life shall have no end has been abundantly proved above (nn. 113–123). Hence, it is right for us to conclude that the existence of the moral law, and of its sanction require that man's soul should be immortal. (See Bossuet's admirable sermon on Providence.)

§ IV. Objections

123. Remark. As most of the objections against the truth just established are based on materialistic principles, or rather on purely gratuitous assumptions, it is evident that they must all fall to the ground like the arguments on which they are founded. These arguments we have completely refuted above (nn. 94–110), and have thus sapped the foundation of all materialistic theories devised to oppose the mighty truth of the spiritual nature of man's soul.

We must, however, mention some special difficulties and furnish appropriate answers.

First Objection. If the soul were immortal, men would not fear death, but they would rather desire it as a passage to an interminable happy life. But all men fear death and do their utmost to avoid it. Therefore, the instinct of nature tells us that our soul is not immortal.

Answer. This very fear of death furnishes an additional proof of the immortality of the soul, for, as experience teaches, it is felt most keenly by those, who, having led a wicked, impious life, are frightened at the thought of God's avenging justice, awaiting them in a future world; and if even the just are not entirely exempt from some fear at the moment of their departure from this life, this fear does not spring from any apprehension, lest the soul, when separated from the body, should cease to exist, but chiefly from the two following causes:

1. From the natural repugnance, which the soul experiences in being violently separated from the body, with which it is naturally destined to remain united, so as to form the integral compound constituting man. And this fact simply proves how conformable to this natural tendency of the soul is the revealed dogma of the final resurrection, when the union of soul and body, temporarily interrupted by death, will again be realized at the end of time, and shall endure forever. Then the Redeemer's words recorded in St. John's Gospel will be completely fulfilled: "*The hour cometh, wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they that have done good, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment*" (5, 28–29).

2. The fear of death arises also from the anxiety of the future lot that awaits us in eternity; for, no man, however pure his conscience, can, without a special revelation from God, know for certain what his future eternal lot will be; though he may form very probable conjectures concerning it, which conjectures are amply sufficient to check any excessive fear and to enable him to meet death with courage and resignation.

Second Objection. The end of the human soul is to animate the body; but, at death, this end ceases; for the body is no longer fit for life. Therefore, the soul also must cease to exist, since its existence would then be useless.

Answer. We remark, that the existence of the human soul has, at least, two ends; one is *proximate* and *inadequate* and

partaking of the nature of a means; the other is *final* and *adequate*. We grant that the first of these ends, which is the temporary animation of the body in this life, ceases with death; though, as we learn from Christian revelation, this separation is to last only till the day of the final resurrection; but we deny that the other, namely, the final end, ceases at the moment of death; for, the final end of the human soul, as manifested by its faculties, desires, operations, etc., is the glorification of God, an end which will reward the just by their attainment of eternal, perfect happiness in the next world (nn. 61–63).

As to the soul of the brutes, we may with truth say that its ultimate end is the animation of the body in this life; for, as brutes are destitute of intelligence and liberty, and, therefore, incapable of merit or demerit, they cannot have been created for any other end than that which is attainable in this life, where they serve the purpose of glorifying God by their existence, faculties and by their usefulness to man, for whose benefit they were made.

Third Objection. The immortality of the human soul may be known by revelation, but it cannot be proved by reason; in fact, the immortality of the soul depends on the will of the Creator. But we cannot, by reason alone, know what that will is, as we cannot tell the secret desires or will of any human being, so long as they are not outwardly manifested to us.

Answer. Aristotle, Plato, Seneca and Cicero certainly did not know divine revelation, so as to learn this truth from it; and yet, not only were they convinced of the immortality of the soul, but they actually proved it, as their yet-existing works evidently show. The immortality of the soul depends upon the will of God in this sense, that God was free to create or not to create such a soul as ours; but not in this sense, that our soul is now immortal, only because God wills it to be, independently of any signs or marks or indications of immortality imprinted on the soul itself by the hand of the Creator.

It is true that, as we cannot know the secret will of any

human being, so with stronger reason, we cannot know by reason alone the will of God; but if God manifests His will by giving to the being He creates, some faculties, aspirations, tendencies, requiring an immortal existence to be realized, it is clear that we can then know God's will, just as we can know the will of any human being from the exterior signs manifesting it. Now, as our argument proved, it is precisely from such outward manifestations and signs that we argued the immortality of the soul.

Therefore, the immortality of the soul, announced by revelation, can be proved even from reason.

Fourth Objection. If it is true, as stated in the thesis (n. 118), that a natural desire cannot be useless, namely, frustrated, and will, therefore, be realized in the next life, then you must admit one or other of these consequences: first, that even the wicked will be perfectly and eternally happy; second, that, if they cannot be happy, *their* soul at least must be annihilated and therefore is not immortal.

Answer. Neither of these consequences can be admitted; for the first, the eternal and perfect happiness of the wicked, is against the attribute of divine justice, which cannot reward iniquity; the second is against the thesis, which states that not even one single soul, whether good or wicked, will be annihilated by God.

The desire for perfect happiness will not be frustrated in this sense, that if the condition required by God's justice and man's nature for its attainment is fulfilled, happiness will certainly be attained; but not in this sense, that it must be attained at all events and in all cases, even if that condition be not verified; for, as right reason teaches us, the attainment of happiness, which must be conformable to God's infinite wisdom and justice, is not *absolute* but *conditional,* since it concerns man, an intelligent free being, capable of good or evil, of merit or demerit, and the condition required, as reason teaches us, is submission to God's will by the observance of moral laws and moral order, viz., by the conscientious discharge of man's threefold duty to God, to himself and to his fellow men.

As all men are endowed with free will, and all receive the means and helps required to enable them to observe the moral laws, to comply with God's will and thus put the condition necessary for attaining perfect happiness, it is evident that the desire for such happiness will not be frustrated, so far as it depends on God.

Briefly, on the part of God, the desire of perfect happiness, which He Himself impressed on the human soul, must certainly be realized, granted; on the part of men, we distinguish: if they fulfill the conditions required, granted; if they do not, we deny. (See Part V.)

Fifth Objection. As intellectual activity is always accompanied by sensitive images supplied by bodily organs, it is argued that the soul deprived of them by death will either remain in an unconscious state or cease altogether to exist, since it can no longer act.

Answer. What we state on the destiny of man in nn. 10–14, 62–63, furnishes a complete reply to this difficulty. But it can be solved independently of any reference to the soul's future state as known from divine revelation.

We deny that either of those consequences will result after the soul's separation from the body. All that follows is that, as the soul's mode of existence is then quite different, so also will be its mode of acting, for the Creator is certainly able to adjust it to other conditions besides those of the present life. As to the mind's activity in that new state St. Thomas writes: "The soul after death understands in three ways. First, by species, images, which it has received whilst in the body and are treasured up in memory; secondly, by species, images, divinely infused; thirdly, by beholding the images, species of things in other souls (*substantiæ separatæ*). But this last mode is not subject to its will, but rather to the will of its fellow-souls volunteering communication." (Summa, I, q. 89; De anima, a. 15.)

Sixth Objection. A difficulty urged by a Protestant theologian, Biedermann, is as follows: "If the soul were capable of an endless duration, its nature would be infinite. Now infinity belongs to God alone."

Answer. This is truly a very old difficulty; in fact St. Thomas put it to himself six hundred years ago. Whether this Protestant writer borrowed it from him and overlooked his answer, we cannot tell. Here is the holy Doctor's solution. "In order to last infinitely it is not necessary for a being to be infinite: it is only required that it should be kept in existence continually by the Almighty Creator who preserves all creatures." (Quæst. disp. de anima, a. 14, n. 4.)

The assumption then that immortality is tantamount to infinity is evidently absolutely false. This is proper of God alone, who exists from all eternity: hence, He alone is infinite.

Seventh Objection. Among the opponents of immortality are reckoned (n. 112) the advocates of what they call voluntary immortality, a novel theory devised in England a few years ago and defended by its chief exponent, the Rev. Edward White of the Congregational Union. It consists in this that man may, in the present life, freely choose an honest, moral conduct to be rewarded by eternal happiness; or a career of sin to be punished by annihilation.

To state this newfangled doctrine is to refute it. It has no foundation either in human reason or in divine revelation. It assumes what is radically false that the soul's immortality to be bestowed on the just is the gift of Redemption, while, as all admit, it is due to the fact of creation. Moreover, the new, gratuitous view of man's destiny is completely refuted by the arguments adduced against the soul's annihilation.

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PART III

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

GENERAL IDEAS AND PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

CHAPTER I

GENERAL IDEAS

§ I. Religion

125. In the two preceding parts of our apologetical treatise it has been shown that God exists: that He is a necessary, self-existing, eternal, omnipotent Being, the Creator and Ruler of the Universe: that man, the noblest among contingent, terrestrial beings, is God's own creature (nn. 1–63).

We have next seen that man has a soul: he is therefore more than matter (n. 64).

That he has a spiritual, free, rational soul; and he is therefore more than an animal (nn. 65–110).

That he has an immortal soul; and he is therefore above the whole perishable world (nn. 111–124).

That man's highest destiny in this life is to fit himself for the endless happiness of the next (nn. 61–63).

From these preliminaries the existence of religion follows as a necessary consequence, and, with it, the duty of recognizing God as our first beginning and last end.

Man depends on God as the effect on its cause, and religion consists in practically acknowledging this dependence.

The term *religion* is derived from the Latin verb *religare*, to bind, because religion unites man to his Creator by the bonds of knowledge and love, and thus attests his dependence on Him as the supreme Author of his being and the beneficent source of all the endowments he possesses. This definition has been tersely expressed by St. Augustine (*De vera religione*), who said: "It is religion that binds us to the One Omnipotent God." Though there exists an infinite distance between God and man, yet they are most closely united, in as much as man could not exist without Him and can be directed only to Him as his last, happy end. The statement of its chief divisions will explain still more clearly the true concept of religion and of the duties it implies. Religion is first divided into *theoretical* and *practical*, which in their exercise must be absolutely inseparable. Theoretical religion consists in the knowledge of the truths which clearly determine the relations between God and men: whilst practical religion points out the duties naturally resulting from the said relations. The next division or distinction is between *objective* and *subjective* religion. By the former is meant the sum total or assemblage of the truths and obligations establishing the moral relations between God and men as they exist in themselves.

By the latter is meant religion as actually existing in individual subjects, in as much as they recognize the aforesaid relations and act accordingly.

In the third place, religion may be *true* or *false*.

The true religion is that which possesses a correct knowledge and belief of God, and renders to Him a true and legitimate or lawful worship. Owing to their right conception of the honor and adoration due to God, it renders creatures acceptable to Him in the present life, and secures to them eternal happiness in the next.

On the contrary, that is called a false religion, which contains wrong notions of God, renders to Him an erroneous worship, and cannot consequently make its adherents pleasing to God, infinite truth, and worthy of everlasting recompense.

If Almighty God reveals a supernatural religion, and

promulgates it with sufficient motives of credibility, all are bound to accept it and to worship Him according to the belief and prescriptions of that supernatural religion. Hence no form of worship devised by men can be agreeable to God and lead such worshippers to their last end, everlasting bliss.

A striking and, at the same time, a sad instance of false religion just described is that professed in the past as in the present by many deluded people who, rejecting all creeds, dogmas or formularies of belief, contend that genuine, saving religion essentially consists in the mere practice of external works. As St. Augustine tells us (De civitate Dei) such was the theory held by the heathens of his time, who were wont to say, "What need is there for us of your Christian faith? Is it not enough to lead an honest life?" A similar error has been revived and prevails among several Protestant sects. Startled by the ever-increasing divisions of belief and creeds and despairing of being able to secure unity of faith, they thought they had found a panacea for all their religious dissensions by professing absolute indifferentism regarding all creeds or formulas of belief, satisfied with leading pious, religious lives. The founder of this new sect was Philip Jakob Spener, a German preacher, who died in the year 1705.

To refute this false doctrine and disabuse its unhappy victims of their huge delusion, it is enough to recall the two following testimonies of Christ Himself. In the last chapter of St. Mark's Gospel (16, 16), we read: "*And he* (Jesus) *said to them* (His Apostles) . . . *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned.*" Behold here the necessity of believing under pain of damnation what God has revealed!

In St. Matthew's Gospel (28, 19–20) it is written: "*Jesus coming spoke to them* (His Apostles), *saying . . . Going therefore, teach ye all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*" Behold here the necessity of believing what Christ taught, and of doing what He commanded!

The last and highly important division is here fully explained.

The relations between God and man are of two kinds: Some result immediately and necessarily from the nature of man, and with the duties thence arising form *natural religion;* the others have been added by the independent and sovereign will of God and form *supernatural religion.* It is extremely important to have a clear and precise idea of this distinction.

126. Natural Religion. Formed by God out of nothing man receives from his Creator all that he is and all that he has; the body with its senses, the soul with its faculties. It is to God that man owes, during every moment of his existence, the preservation, development and activity of his body and soul, because for all of these the divine co-operation is necessary. From God also come the created things with which man is in constant relation, either through necessity or for reasons of usefulness or pleasure.

If this is so, as reason shows, as man receives all from God absolutely, to such an extent that, without God, man would have nothing, would not even exist, nor continue to exist and act, it is clearly evident that man *belongs* to God; that he is the property of God; that he should live in absolute *dependence* upon his Creator and Benefactor; that he should think, speak and act only that which God wills or permits; that he should conduct himself, everywhere and always, as a loyal subject toward his sovereign Master.

These relations and duties are *necessary* and *unchangeable,* for the nature of man does not change and God cannot cease to be his Creator and sovereign Master.

It is these relations of absolute dependence and these duties which constitute *Natural Religion.* It may be defined: the aggregate or sum of the relations between God and man which exist by virtue of the creation itself and of the duties which devolve upon man by reason of these relations.

127. Supernatural or Positive Religion. Catholic doctrine teaches that to these original bonds between man and his Creator, God, by His supreme authority and in His infinite bounty, has added other relations more exalted and other communications still more intimate.

Assuredly *nothing obliged* God to do for man more than

was demanded by the requirements of the nature with which He endowed him; but *nothing could prevent* God from bestowing upon His creatures gifts still more excellent. God was free to raise to the dignity of adopted son the creature who was only His subject; to communicate to him, by means of sanctifying grace, a principle of life higher than that which man originally possessed in virtue of his own nature, thus preparing for him, at the close of this life, the incomparable happiness of contemplating face to face in heaven his Creator and Father, such as He is in Himself. Such an act of bounty, done in the fullness of His dominion over man, in nowise destroys the first work of God: for the relations and duties that constitute natural religion continue to exist and these new relations only tend to elevate and perfect the nature of man. It is thus in a tree; grafting does not destroy the nature of the original stock, but only improves the quality of its fruit.

From these new relations necessarily flow new *duties*. But these new duties are far from forming an excessive burden. Light in themselves the obligations are superabundantly compensated by the many advantages which result to man from being raised to the supernatural order. In assigning to us, as our *last end*, a destiny much higher than that which would have been our lot in the purely natural order, God reserves to us, in the other life, an eternal happiness incomparably greater. At the same time He provides us by supernatural grace with *helps* most powerful and abundant, to enable us to attain this end and to merit this blessing. We may add that this grace renders much more easy to us the observance of the *Decalogue* or *Ten Commandments*, that is to say, the fulfillment of the duties of natural religion itself.

This *supernatural religion*, which is also called *positive* religion, because given to man and imposed upon him by a formal and positive act of the will of God, may be thus defined: the aggregate or sum of the new relations which raise men to the dignity of children of God and assign to them as their chief end beatific vision, and the summary of the new duties which result from these supernatural relations.

128. Remarks. 1. By the last end of man is meant the supreme purpose of his existence, the object which he is under obligation to attain and the possession of which will secure to him his perfection and sovereign happiness.

2. God alone is the last end of every intelligent creature. God can be known directly or in Himself, or He may be known indirectly, viz., by the means of his works. If man had been created only for a natural end, his fidelity in following, during this life of trial or probation, the precepts of natural law would have merited him after such trial *natural* happiness. Then, having a knowledge of God in a more perfect manner but always through created beings, which are like vestiges or footprints of the divine perfections, he would have loved God with a love proportionate to his knowledge, and in this knowledge and love he would have obtained the satisfaction of his natural desires. Much superior, however, is the *super-natural* end or happiness of man. It consists in seeing God in His essence and intimate being, in loving Him in consequence of this vision, and in possessing Him in an immediate, or direct, and ineffable manner. To be enabled to do this, human intelligence must necessarily be raised above its natural powers by an assistance which is essentially supernatural and which theologians call the *light of glory*. This grace in a way communicates to the soul *participation in the divine nature,* as St. Peter expresses it (II, 1, 4), and it makes it capable of enjoying the same happiness as that which constitutes the infinite happiness of God Himself.

129. It would be an error to think that Adam and Eve were raised to the supernatural order only after having passed a certain time, more or less extended, under the rules of the natural law alone, or natural religion: the privilege of being the children of God was conferred upon them at *the same time* as their existence. It results thence that man never had a *purely natural* end. In Part V: *Doctrinal Teaching of Jesus Christ Concerning God, Man and the World,* these ideas are more fully set forth.

§ II. Revelation

130. Nature of Revelation. Natural religion being based upon the necessary relations which unite man to God by virtue of their very nature, it is enough for the purpose of proving its existence and necessity to have a sufficient knowledge of the two beings between whom these relations exist. Hence man is able by his reason alone to discover the truths and precepts of natural religion. He finds them, so to speak, engraved by the hand of God on his intelligence and heart.

It is altogether different as to supernatural religion: As this concerns relations, which do not flow from the nature of the beings themselves, but solely from the free will of God, natural reason is *powerless* to discover them. These truths and precepts of the supernatural order can be known to us only by a divine manifestation, by *revelation*. As shown by the etymology of the word, *to reveal* means to *remove the veil* which covers an object; it is to show forth an unknown or hidden thing. Revelation is therefore the *means* by which God makes *supernatural religion* known to man. Hence it follows that in ordinary use the terms *supernatural religion* and *revealed religion* are often promiscuously employed as meaning one and the same thing.

Revelation taken in general may be defined: a supernatural act of God by which He makes known to man certain truths. Nevertheless, God may, if it so pleases Him, reveal not only supernatural truths, but also truths which by themselves are not beyond the reach of reason. In fact, a good number of truths of this kind have been revealed to us. Thus, the precepts contained in the Decalogue, with the exception of that which regards the Sabbath observance, belong to natural law. God, however, has not deemed it a useless act to fortify our conscience by a solemn revelation of these precepts. To the light of reason He has added the authority of His infallible word, in order to render more *easy*, more *certain*, and more *universal* the knowledge of these truths, which are fundamental and necessary to all men.

131. Possibility of Revelation. To overthrow, were it

possible, from its very foundation all supernatural religion, its enemies have gathered together a number of sophisms tending to prove the impossibility of any divine revelation whatsoever. We do not deem it necessary to devote much time to refuting them at length. We shall do something better. We shall prove, in a convincing manner, that revelation did really take place; thence the conclusion will naturally follow that it is possible, as logicians teach us: "*Ab esse ad posse valet illatio,*" from the existence of a given fact we can legitimately infer its possibility. Indeed, a simple commonsense remark is sufficient to upset all the scaffolding of rationalism. Man, having an intelligence finite and limited in so many ways, has, however, received from God the power of communicating his thoughts to his fellow-men; and shall rationalism pretend to have us believe that God cannot place Himself in communication with the creatures that He Himself has made? The learned man can communicate to others the secrets of nature which his genius has discovered, and shall it be said that God has not the means of making known to us our elevation to the supernatural order? It is, moreover, evident that far from destroying reason, far from rendering it useless, as they claim, revelation presupposes reason and requires it. Besides, it makes it more perfect and enriches it, by manifesting to it sublime and important truths, which unaided reason would never have been able to discover. Would anyone say that the telescope destroys the sight because it extends its range and reveals celestial globes hidden away in the depths of starry space? Are the physical forces of man destroyed because the lever, steam and electricity increase their powers tenfold and more?

132. Necessity of Revelation. Revelation is therefore possible, and its existence cannot be questioned. But is it *necessary?* As we shall prove that it has been made, this might seem to be an idle question. It is important, however, to treat it, especially in these days when so many men maintain the independence and supremacy of reason, and absolutely deny the existence of supernatural revelation.

Let us distinguish at the outset *moral* from *absolute*

physical necessity. The latter presupposes the total impossibility of attaining, without revelation, the knowledge of religious truth; the former presupposes very great difficulty, not, however, unsurmountable.

It is evident that revelation was *absolutely* necessary to enable us to know of the existence and duties of the *supernatural* order. Here indeed, as we have seen, all depends on the free will of God; He alone can make known to us the decrees of His merciful wisdom. The same necessity exists when there is a question of the knowledge of the mysteries which it may please Him to teach us.

But it is not so as to the theoretical and practical truths which form the basis of *natural* religion: reason is capable, even in its present state of decadence, of acquiring by itself sufficient knowledge of them. Thus it can, by its own light, know the existence and unity of God, His providential action on mankind and the world, the immortality of the human soul, the obligation of a moral law with its sanction (reward or punishment) in the future life; in a word, it can know the foundations of the moral life. Yet if mankind had been abandoned to itself, if God had not come to its assistance, by the light of a positive revelation, the *immense majority of men,* from want of time, defect of capacity or lack of courage, would never have attained a *clear* and *certain* knowledge of these essential truths, or would have obtained it only in a *slow* and *insufficient* manner. And yet it is not merely to men of high intellect, nor for a limited period of life, that religion is indispensable. It is necessary for all at all times.

133. Even when it is question of truths belonging to natural religion, experience teaches that without the help of God's revelation unaided reason is morally incapable of fully grasping and applying them in their integrity. Hence in the present condition of mankind such truths could not easily be attained by all with certainty and without danger of error. This was the contention of the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas, whose arguments are here briefly summed up:

"If a truth of this nature were left to the sole inquiry of reason, three disadvantages would follow. One is that the

knowledge of God would be confined to few, and a large majority could never arrive by study to the highest grade of human knowledge consisting in the cognition of God. Another disadvantage is that such as did arrive at the knowledge or discovery of the aforesaid truth, would take a long time over it on account of the depth of such truth and the many prerequisites to the study. Hence the knowledge of God, the best instrument for making men perfect and good, would accrue only to a few, and to those few after a considerable lapse of time. A third disadvantage is that, owing to the weakness of our judgment and the perturbing force of imagination, there is some admixture of error in most of the investigations of human reason." (Contra Gentiles, I, iv.)

As to the truths *in detail* and the entire assemblage of man's natural duties towards God, his neighbor and himself, this practical impossibility is still more apparent. To be convinced of the weakness and defectibility of reason when left to itself, it is enough to recall the monstrous errors which, with the exception of the case of the Jewish people, inundated the world before the coming of Jesus Christ. Who can tell the numberless aberrations of the most celebrated philosophical schools as to most important and vital questions, matters which seem so simple to minds illuminated by the splendid light of Christianity? What monstrous errors in Plato himself, even in his celebrated book on "The Republic!" One of his most enthusiastic admirers, Aimé Martin, very justly reproaches him with combining cruelty with the most flagrant immorality. The history of philosophy is but the history of the *variations* of human reason, and already in his day Cicero declared that he could not imagine any absurdity which had not been maintained by some philosopher or other. The most enlightened men of antiquity were grieved at their own ignorance, and at the same time acknowledged that light could come to them only from heaven. "The truths necessary to men are easily learned," says Plato, "if some one were to teach them to us; but no one will teach them unless God will show the way." "We must wait," he says elsewhere, "for someone to come to teach us how to act towards God and

towards man." These philosophers acknowledged more openly still their helplessness to uplift the masses from their moral and intellectual degradation, and, indeed, to speak frankly, they cared little about the matter. Moreover, how could they have succeeded in such an undertaking, when they could not agree among themselves concerning the more important truths, and when but too often their lives were in open contradiction with their doctrines?

As to modern philosophers, who, after so many centuries of Christianity, rely solely upon the light of reason to find an answer to the great problems that are ever preoccupying men's souls, it happens but too often that they only renew the errors of antiquity; they deserve that to them should be applied the words of St. Paul: *"They became vain in their thoughts and their foolish heart was darkened, for, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."* (Rom. 1, 21–22.) Is there a single truth of the natural order that has found favor in their eyes?

Take as an instance in point the treatise of natural theology. All conservative philosophers hold that such a branch of knowledge, the study of God as known by reason, is an integral part of any system of philosophy worthy of the name. It is in fact the most important section of all, the keystone of the arch. It is the supreme book, that for which all others should serve as a preparation. It is intended to show that God is the first, efficient, independent Cause, the origin of all things but Himself. Hence Holy Scripture tells us: *"All men are vain, in whom there is not the knowledge of God."* (Wisd. 13, 1.) What do we find in this respect outside the field of Catholic philosophy? Excluding some few laudable exceptions, it does not seem too much to say that in no case is a Natural Theology considered as an essential part of their system, whatever that may be. Their discussion of the Supreme Being is marred and perverted by flagrant Pantheism, Materialism and Rationalism. We are told that God is not a Creator; that Evolution can now dispense with Him; that the Heavens only show the skill and glory of the astronomer; that God is not omnipotent, not infinite, not

really distinct from the world or from the human soul. The proofs for His existence, devised by the greatest geniuses of both ancient and modern times, are flouted and rejected as not valid. We are hardly surprised when they tell us that He is not personal and not moral, or when one of their school gravely informs us that we ourselves are just as self-existent as God, that He is merely *primus inter pares*, first among equals. (George H. Joyce, S.J., "The Principles of Natural Theology," *Introduction.*)

Another instance of the widespread aberrations of modern thought calling for aid from above is furnished by the following fact. On the 8th of December, in the year 1864, the Supreme Pontiff Pius IX published the *Syllabus*, a catalogue of 80 propositions, which He solemnly condemned as opposed not only to revealed Faith, but also to the very principles of natural reason; insidious errors, such as Pantheism, Naturalism, Indifferentism, Rationalism and Communism, sapping foundations of all natural and supernatural knowledge. By such timely proscription the vigilance of the chief Shepherd of Christ's flock safeguarded the faith of Catholics and saved civil society from both intellectual and moral corruption.

It is, therefore, a *moral necessity* for mankind in its present condition to learn through revelation, a means as sure and certain as it is easy, even those truths which, strictly speaking, may be discovered by human reason left to its own resources, and the knowledge of which is indispensable for the proper guidance of human life.

134. To convince ourselves that the doctrine of the Church on the necessity of revelation is really that which has just been set forth, let us see what is the teaching of the Vatican Council (1870, Sess. 2, ch. 2): "The Holy Church, our Mother," it says, "holds and teaches, that God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known with certitude by the natural light of human reason, through created things; because the invisible perfections of God have become visible, since the creation of the world, by the knowledge which His works give of Him. However, it has pleased the wisdom and goodness of God to reveal Himself to us and to make known

to us the eternal decrees of His will in another way, which is the supernatural way." This is what the Apostle says: "*God, who diversely and in many ways spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all in these days, hath spoken to us by His Son.*" (Heb. 1, 1–2.) It is to this divine revelation that all men owe it that, even in the present condition of the human race, they can know *promptly,* with *certainty,* and without *mingling of error,* those among divine things which are not of themselves inaccessible to human intelligence. However, it is not for this reason that revelation is *absolutely* necessary, but it is because God, in His infinite bounty, has destined man for a *supernatural* end, which is beyond the natural capacity of human intelligence.

§ III. Object and Division of This Course

135. We have just set forth in a summary manner *Catholic Teaching* as to religion and revelation. But is this teaching founded on truth, does it rest on *facts* absolutely certain? *Does there really exist a supernatural religion, revealed to man and imposed upon him under penalty of not attaining his last end if he willfully neglects it? What is this religion, and where is it taught in all its purity and in all its completeness?*

It is the answer to these questions which forms the object of this course of Apologetics. In Part IV we shall prove that God has really revealed Himself to man, and that, since the time of Christ, the Christian religion is the supernatural religion, obligatory on all men. Then we shall prove that the Catholic Church alone preserves this Christian religion in its completeness and primitive integrity, and that she alone is entrusted with the duty of teaching it to the world.

§ IV. The Three Historical Phases of Revealed Religion

136. Let us begin by stating an absolutely undeniable fact, attested as it is by all the documents of *history.* This fact is, that there always has been on earth a religion claiming to be supernatural and revealed by God. We see it coming

into the world with mankind, and then following up through the centuries the different phases of its development. These phases bear respectively the names of the Primitive or Patriarchal religion, the Mosaic religion, and the Christian religion.

We shall begin by giving a sufficient idea of these three great *historical* phases, without however prejudging anything about the *divine character* of each of them, a matter to be treated in Part IV.

First Phase—The Primitive or Patriarchal Religion

137. The primitive religion is the supernatural or positive religion, which God imposed upon our first parents at the very beginning of their existence. It contained dogmas surpassing the powers of human reason left to itself, for instance, the elevation of man to the supernatural order, the existence of good and bad angels, the manner in which the body of Adam and that of Eve were formed, and after the Fall, the promise of a Redeemer; it included also positive commands with the sanction of rewards or punishments.

This positive religion was preserved in the midst of humanity by two agencies: conscience, which dictated the precepts of natural law; tradition, which transmitted from generation to generation the knowledge of the positive truths and precepts added to it and revealed by God. Unfortunately, through the ever-increasing prevalence of sin, and general prevarication, the ideas of natural law were obscured in the minds of men; they no longer read with clearness its precepts in their conscience; they found it difficult to distinguish between the good which they should do and the evil which they should avoid. On the other hand, the tradition of revealed truths and precepts was changed and corrupted by the lapse of time.

In order to preserve primitive religion in the midst of erring humanity, God chose Abraham and his posterity. *To the Patriarchs* He confirmed and set forth more clearly the previous revelation. He taught them new truths and imposed upon them new precepts, for instance, the practice of circumcision. Primitive religion thus received its first develop-

ment under the patriarchs: hence its double name of primitive and patriarchal religion.

Second Phase—Mosaic Religion

138. Man continued still to wander away from his true end. God, whose goodness is unbounded, wished to bring him back to rectitude by a new means, which would render his salvation more easy and prepare the way more efficaciously for the Messiah, the Redeemer promised after the fall of man. He chose Moses and the prophets who succeeded him to renew the knowledge of natural law and the antecedent revelations, and to lay down new precepts. This revelation was made, as we know, on Mt. Sinai, under conditions designed to leave a profound and lasting impression on the mind and heart of the Hebrew people.

The Mosaic religion or law is therefore the body of the dogmas and precepts revealed principally to the Hebrew people through Moses and the other prophets, who acted as intermediaries between God and His chosen people. This law, which was in reality but the primitive religion raised to a degree of perfection which it had not possessed up to that time, was not addressed to the whole world, as the first law had been, but only to the Jewish people; moreover, it was not destined to embrace all times; as its special purpose was to prepare for the coming of the Messiah, it was to last only until this great event should be verified. Hence God did not wish to render it complete in every respect. This perfection, according to the degree determined by the wisdom of the Most High, was reserved for the religion which the Messiah Himself was to announce to men. (n. 134.)

Third Phase—The Christian Religion

139. When the times marked by the eternal decrees were accomplished, the Savior, promised from the beginning of the world, came to redeem mankind and to establish a religion which, taking its name from its Divine Founder, has been called the Christian religion.

The Christian religion, or the law of the Gospel, is thus the religion which Jesus Christ Himself brought into the world. It necessarily comprises, like the others, all the truths and precepts of natural law, but it teaches them in a way which is eminently clear, certain and perfect; it presents, moreover, a complete body of supernatural truths, precepts and helps.

The Christian religion has repealed the Mosaic law as to that part which was particularly designed for the Jewish people, and it has become the only religion necessary to all men until the end of time. It is not to receive, as the others, further development, Jesus Christ having given it to us as perfect as God wished it to be for the salvation of mankind.

The aforestated three phases of revealed religion may also be considered under the aspect of a gradual, progressive manifestation of the divine will. The revelation of Redemption, made known to our first parents after the Fall (Gen. 3, 15), was preparatory in the Old Testament and completed in the New. Its first stage began with the Patriarchs (Gen. 49, 10), and continued with Moses and the Prophets (Job 19, 22–27), containing and diffusing among the nations the promise of the coming Redeemer. The next stage, the Mosaic revelation, was a brighter announcement and a closer preparation of forthcoming events. It was intended not only for the Chosen People, the Israelites, but also as a divinely appointed means for the preservation to mankind of the religious traditions of the past. In the days of the Prophets (Isaias 50, Jeremias 23, Aggeus 2 and Dan. 9), the revelation of the Gospel, of the supernatural, and divine provisions appeared in purer and clearer light. But it must be said that divine revelation reached the meridian splendor, when the Incarnate Word appeared upon earth, lived and conversed with men and brought the majestic truth of Redemption into the clearest light by the preaching of His Gospel. This is precisely what St. Paul announces in his Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. 1, 1–2): "*God, who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days*

hath spoken to us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the world.''

Remark. From the preceding exposition, it results that these three religions, the Primitive, the Mosaic and the Christian, though accidentally differing, are essentially *but one and the same religion,* developed by God in the course of centuries. In reality they have all three the same author, God; the same supernatural end, beatific vision; the same fundamental means, supernatural grace for the intellect and the will;—all three rest, for the realization of man's destiny, upon a Redeemer, either promised or having come; the Decalogue is common to all; the dogmas, though progressively revealed, are found at least in germ and often explicitly in the three religions. It is, therefore, the same religion, which has passed through two preparatory phases, to receive at the end, in Christian revelation, its definitive perfection.

Conclusion. These are the facts attested by history and the traditions of the Peoples of the Earth. The question now is to know, if, in each of these three phases, this religion, assuredly venerable by its antiquity, can legitimately claim, and vindicate for itself, to the exclusion of all others, *a supernatural and divine origin.* In other words, was it really God that either directly by Himself or indirectly, through His representatives, revealed religion to men and required from them its acceptance and compliance as the necessary means for the attainment of their supernatural end? To this paramount question we give an emphatically affirmative answer for the following reason.

In the first chapter of Part IV of our course we shall demonstrate both the historical and the supernatural value of the Sacred Scriptures, by proving that not only are they authentic, genuine and veracious records, but also that they are divinely inspired, God's own word and incontestable channels of divine truth. Now as what we know of primitive Mosaic and Christian revelation is chiefly contained in Holy Scripture, by vindicating the divine inspiration of both the Old and the New Testament, we establish at the same time the great fact that God the inspirer of Holy Writ is unde-

niably the author of the primitive, Mosaic and Christian revelation, which it contains. This was the thought of St. Paul, as we learn from his Epistle to the Hebrews (12, 1–2): *"Therefore . . . let us run by patience to the fight proposed to us: Looking on Jesus the author and finisher of faith."*

CHAPTER II

EXAMINATION OF THREE PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

140. Before entering upon the demonstration of the divinity of the Christian religion, it is well to clear up three questions, or in other words, to answer three objections, which to many minds are stumbling blocks in their search after religious truth. The first relates to the part to be taken by reason in matters of faith or supernatural religion; the second concerns the mysteries contained in religion; and the third refers to the means by which reason ascertains with certainty the existence of divine revelation.

§ I. Of the Function of Reason in Matters of Faith

141. Rationalism claims that revelation or faith in divine authority destroys reason and renders it absolutely useless. Nothing could be more erroneous than this assertion. We have already shown this above (n. 131), but it is well to insist upon this point.

1. "Reason and faith have no cause to fear each other," wrote Pius IX in 1846, "for each of them is equally derived from the same sole and immutable source of truth, God." (Encyl. Letter: *Qui Pluribus.*) In chapter IV, concerning the relations between faith and reason, the Vatican Council expresses itself in these terms: "The Catholic Church has always held and holds that there exist two orders of knowledge, distinct in principle and as to their object. In their *principle,* because by the one we derive our knowledge from natural reason, and by the other from divine faith. In their *object,* because besides those things, to which natural reason

can attain, there are mysteries hidden in God, proposed for our belief, that cannot be known to us unless they are divinely revealed." Further on the Council says: "Although faith is above reason, there never can be real disagreement between faith and reason, because the same God who has revealed the mysteries and communicated faith, has also given to the human mind the natural light of reason, and we know God cannot contradict Himself, nor can truth ever be in contradiction with truth."

"Not only can faith and reason never be in disaccord, but they lend each other mutual help: right reason *demonstrates* the foundation of faith, and enlightened by the light of faith, it *develops* the science of divine things; faith, on the other hand, frees and protects reason from error and enriches it with knowledge of many kinds. The Church, therefore, far from being opposed to the study of the arts and sciences, favors these studies and propagates them in a thousand ways." (St. Thomas, Contra Gentiles, 1, 7.)

Surely, nothing could be more precise, nothing more formal than these words. The same doctrine is reproduced in the Encyclical of Leo XIII *Æterni patris.* (Aug. 4, 1879.)

2. This teaching of the Church is *in perfect conformity with Holy Scripture.* Far from exacting from us a blind faith, God even forbids us to give credence to every unauthorized or premature saying which may claim to come from heaven. A too eager credulity is the evidence of a fickle nature. *Qui credit cito, levis est corde,* is said in the book of Ecclesiasticus (19, 4). The Apostle St. John on his part warns us against unreflecting impulses which lead straight to error. "*Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*" (I John 4, 1.) This is also the recommendation of St. Paul to the Thessalonians: "*Despise not prophesies, but prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*" (I Thess. 5, 20, 21.) St. Peter requires the faithful to be always ready to answer those who may ask them to give an account of their hope, that is, of their faith, which is the stay of their hope: "*Being ready always to satisfy every-*

one that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you." (I Pet. 3, 15.)

142. 3. *Catholic Theology* holds the same language. Long ago St. Thomas, the Angel of the Schools, had formulated the doctrine of the Church in these terms: "Reason would not believe, if it did not see that it is necessary to believe." He was only repeating what St. Augustine had written upon that subject in his letter to Consentius: "God forbid that the subjection in which we are with regard to all that forms part of faith, should present us from seeking and inquiring into the reason of what we believe, since *we could not even believe if we were not endowed with reason.*" Is it not clear then that every revelation of God to mankind presupposes that mankind is endowed with the natural capacity of acquiring knowledge? And in this course of Apologetics, to what faculty of man shall we address ourselves if not to his reason; what do we seek but to show how reasonable it is to believe, to submit to the supreme authority of God and to the proved fact of revelation? "Christian faith," says Bourdaloue, "is not a simple acquiescence in belief, nor a simple submission of the intellect, but it is a reasonable acquiescence, a reasonable submission; if this submission were not reasonable, it would not be a virtue. But how could this acquiescence be *reasonable* if reason had no part in it? What are the proofs that render clearly credible to my mind the religion which I profess and consequently all the mysteries which it teaches me? This is what I should endeavor to fathom, this is what I should study with ardor and thoroughly understand; it is here that I must make use of my reason, and where I am not allowed to say: 'I do not reason,' because without this examination and exact discussion, I could have only an uncertain and tottering faith, a faith vague, without principle and without stability." (*Pensées de la foi*, Thoughts on Faith. See "Faith and Folly," by Mgr. John S. Vaughan, Burns & Oates, London, 1901, p. 44.)

Conclusion. It is therefore undeniable that Catholic faith accords to reason its proper object, distinct from that of faith; and that even in matters of faith, reason plays a serious and

important rôle. A part of this is to co-ordinate the various revealed truths, to show the bond that unites them, to prove each of them by fit arguments and to deduce the consequences that flow therefrom; in a word, to make of these truths a *scientific body;* it is what the Council calls the work of developing the science of divine things. This is already beautiful and highly interesting in itself, but there is another still more important function of reason, it is to demonstrate the truth and divine origin of the Gospel, that is to say, to establish with certainty the *foundations* of faith, by showing that it is perfectly reasonable, right and necessary to believe. According to the Vatican Council, as also according to Leo XIII in the Encyclical already cited, it is *to reason* that this demonstration belongs, and it is no longer allowable, under penalty of error, to contest or deny to reason this right and power. On reason also devolves the duty of *vindicating* revealed truths from the attacks of their enemies. "It is a proved title of honor," says this same Pope, "to philosophy, to be the bulwark of faith and the firm rampart of religion." What more than this can these men, who proclaim themselves the champions of human reason, demand? They can no longer pretend with any appearance of truth that the Catholic Church does not acknowledge the rights of reason, that she only seeks to crush reason under the weight of authority. But if it belongs to reason to prove that God has spoken to men, it is an undeniable duty for it, as soon as this proof is made, to bow before the sovereign authority of God, to acknowledge that which is attested by this infallible testimony.

143. Remark. From what we have said, it must not, however, be inferred that it is reason which *directly produces* faith. Faith is a supernatural gift, a virtue, by which we firmly believe the truths revealed by God, *because He has revealed them.* But it is evident that the natural cannot produce the supernatural; reason can only *prepare* man for faith by the examination of the *grounds or motives of credibility.* Thus, an unbeliever or a heretic who, by the examination of these grounds becomes convinced of their soundness and consequently of the necessity of giving his adhesion to

revealed truths, has as yet only a belief wholly human; that his faith may become a divine faith, it is necessary that a *supernatural principle* should intervene, that grace bring him to believe those truths as revealed and resting upon the infallible authority of God. We must hasten to add that according to an axiom received in theology: *facienti quod est in se Deus non denegat gratiam* (God does not refuse grace to him who is doing what he can), this divine help, illuminating the *intellect* and prompting the *will*, is never denied to him who applying himself honestly and sincerely to the search after religious truth has recourse to God by humble and confident prayers.

§ II. The Mysteries of Religion

144. Among the truths which God has revealed there are *mysteries*, that is, points of doctrine, which reason, left to its own resources, never could have *discovered*, and of which it does not penetrate the essence or inner nature, but the existence of which it admits on the supreme and infallible authority of God. These truths, however, are far from being a totally closed book to us; we conceive them clearly enough not to confound them with others, we speak of them intelligently, and draw from them for our guidance lessons as useful as they are convincing. Now, is it true, as rationalism pretends, that the presence of mysteries is a sufficient motive to reject as false *a priori*, that is to say, without further examination, a religion which proposes mysteries to our belief? Would it be necessary to *understand* a truth in *itself*, in its essence; in other words, to know perfectly *the how and the wherefore*, in order to be able to *believe* without offending against reason? Surely not; for the honor of the human mind it is sad to think that it should be necessary to have to refute an assertion so absurd and yet so widespread. Let us prove by a few arguments that it is perfectly reasonable to believe in the mysteries of religion.

145. THESIS.—IT IS IN NO WAY CONTRARY TO REASON, IT IS IN FACT PERFECTLY REASONABLE, TO BELIEVE IN THE MYSTERIES OF RELIGION, THE MOMENT WE BECOME CONVINCED THAT THEY ARE REVEALED BY GOD.

FIRST ARGUMENT. If we should have to reject the mysteries of *religion* because we have not a full, adequate knowledge of them, because we do not clearly know the *how* and the *wherefore*, we should for the same reason have to reject all the mysteries of *nature*. "We have a complete knowledge of nothing," Pascal very truly says, and this profound thinker even goes so far as to define science as "a learned ignorance that knows itself." Is there a learned man who has a complete knowledge even of the natural phenomena which seem the most simple? Who has ever penetrated the inner nature of heat and cold, light, gravitation, electricity? Who knows perfectly what is time, space, the infinite, eternity? Who understands the nature of a simple grain of sand, the germination of plants, life, sleep, fatigue, pleasure, death? Who can understand the substantial union in ourselves of mind and matter, the reciprocal communication of our thoughts, feelings and desires by means altogether material, the spoken or written word? Who can understand what is passing in each of our senses, etc.? And yet these are truths which everybody admits, though the essence of these things escapes our intelligence, and though we have of these truths only imperfect knowledge mingled with impenetrable obscurities.

If it is not contrary to reason to believe in these mysteries of *nature*, because their existence is confirmed by our senses and experience, how can it be contrary to reason to admit the mysterious truths of the spiritual or supernatural order, when a witness, whose testimony is unexceptionable, God Himself, attests them? Undoubtedly reason, as we have said, should verify the *reality* of this testimony, but once obtained, this verification itself obliges us to adhere to it without hesitation. Is it not the most worthy use that man can make of his reason, to submit it to God, who is infinite Wisdom? (See Part V.)

Second Argument. If it were contrary to reason to believe on testimony worthy of confidence, truths, the essence of which is unattainable by us, we should be compelled to say that it is repugnant to reason for an *illiterate* person to admit, on the testimony of a learned man, the greater part of the things which the latter teaches him. It is a fact that learned men undoubtedly have a sure knowledge of a multitude of facts, which are above the intelligence of common minds, facts which even seem inadmissible to the unlearned, and opposed to what they think they see every day with their own eyes; such facts for instance as these: that the earth revolves around the sun, that some stars are thousands of times larger than the earth, that they require thousands of years to send us their light, that they contain such and such elements, and so forth. Would anyone claim that these illiterate persons would be acting unreasonably in admitting the assertions of a learned man who is worthy of confidence? Would it be imprudent or unreasonable for a child, blind from nativity, to believe unhesitatingly and with full confidence, the words of his father, whose wisdom and affection he has a thousand times experienced, when the latter speaks of what he can see with a powerful telescope? And yet, does this blind boy understand the manner by which distant objects are made present to the sight of his father? How then could a Christian be unreasonable in believing the mysteries on the affirmation of Him, who is Truth itself?

Third Argument. Being infinite intelligence, it is evident God must *know* the truths which are beyond the limited intelligence of man left to his natural powers. On the other hand, it may be vastly *advantageous* to us to know these truths, to know the purposes and the acts of bounty, mercy and justice of God with respect to mankind; to have a sufficient knowledge of them, without however penetrating into their inner nature, the manner of their existence. And finally, He Who gave to man ears to hear, intellect to understand, and speech to communicate his ideas to his fellowmen, cannot surely be without the *means* of making manifest to His creatures these high and salutary truths. (Ps. 93, 9.)

146. Remarks. Let us add to these arguments a few remarks, which strengthen what we have said and will remove misunderstandings.

1. If we find it difficult to believe the mysteries of religion it is because we may form to ourselves an entirely erroneous idea of these mysteries. If, for instance, the mystery of the Holy Trinity consisted in saying that three distinct natures are only one nature, or that three distinct persons form only one person, this dogma would evidently be contrary to reason and in consequence inadmissible. Reason clearly shows that one cannot be the same thing as three. But this is not by any means the true conception of the mystery as it has been revealed. If it is above the grasp of reason, it is not contrary to it, it is not in contradiction with the unchangeable principles which reason makes known to us. Religion in reality only says that in God three *persons* are only one *nature.* Unity and trinity are not therefore affirmed under the same relation, but under different relations: unity concerns the nature, whilst trinity is affirmed of the persons. It is true our limited intelligence cannot by itself discover this mysterious truth, whose object is the intimate nature of the Infinite Being; but nothing prevents us from believing it on the authentic testimony of God Himself.

"The mystery of the Blessed Trinity is, without exception, the most profound and the most sublime of those proposed by the Christian religion to our faith. We believe that God is not a solitary Being; that from all eternity He begets a Son, the substantial expression of Himself; and that both from the Father and the Son a third person proceeds, whom we call the Holy Ghost. This is our faith. It is set down clearly in the Gospel: "*Going therefore, teach ye all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*" (Matt. 28, 19); it is proclaimed by the uninterrupted voice of nineteen centuries of believers; it is dogmatically defined by the Church.

"Such, then, is this mystery, further beyond the reach of our reason than any other. Without divine revelation, it would have been impossible to conjecture its existence; and

even with the aid of revelation, it is impossible to comprehend it, or prove by our syllogisms its necessity. But although above reason, it is not on that account against reason, and, therefore, reason cannot reject it because of its impossibility.

"But because reason, left to its own resources, cannot conjecture the existence of this mystery, or demonstrate it after its existence has become known, must it necessarily be repugnant to its laws? Can reason show that it is inadmissible? This is what the rationalists assert. They maintain that the mystery of the Trinity involves a contradiction. An infidel of the last century was wont to say 'Believe that one is three, and three are one, and you are a Catholic, because you admit that dogma which is the foundation of all others.' We grant that the mystery of the Blessed Trinity is the pillar which sustains all the other dogmas; but we deny that the Catholic religion ever proposed as an object of our faith such an absurd statement in regard to it.

"The Catholic teaching is simply this: There is *one divine nature,* and in that divine nature there are *three persons*—Unity of Nature, Trinity of Persons. We employ the terms *one* and *three;* but neither does the *three* contain the negation of the *one,* nor the *one* the negation of the *three,* because the *one* refers to the nature of God, the *three* to the persons in that nature. As the assertions, then, relate not to the same thing considered from the same point of view, they are not contradictory, as would be the case should we say that there was but one divine nature, and yet three divine natures; or three divine persons, yet only one divine person. The whole argument of rationalism rests, therefore, upon a misconception of our doctrine."—(Russo, "The True Religion.")

What we have said about the mystery of the Holy Trinity applies also to the Incarnation of the Son of God, and to all the other mysteries. They are all, it is true, *above* reason in the sense here indicated, but none of them is *contrary* to it.

2. For reasonable, fair-minded men, far from being an obstacle to the acknowledgment of the religion which contains them, the existence of these mysteries forms on the contrary a presumption in its favor. The absence of all mystery should

in truth induce a suspicion of its falseness. Indeed, we have seen that, even in the sphere of natural truths, reason finds most profound obscurity; everywhere it is forced to acknowledge and accept as certain things obscure and incomprehensible. How, then, can we suppose that we should not meet with obscurities and incomprehensibilities, when it is a question of religion, that is, of the relations between man and God? How can our intelligence, whose nature is finite, sound the ultimate depths of the Infinite Being? Would it not be regarded as insanity for a man to say: "I am able to know God as far as He can be known, as well as He knows Himself; I can penetrate into His nature and perfections, His will and acts with respect to man; there is nothing in His infinity, in His eternity, in His supreme majesty, which can be a secret for my reason or which is beyond it."

§ III. The Criterion of Certitude in the Attainment of Faith

147. Let us now seek what are the *means* by which reason can prove to itself that God has really revealed to man certain truths and certain precepts, with the obligation upon him of believing them and conforming his conduct to them. What is, in other words, the criterion of certitude in the search after truth?

With respect to man, all truths of every kind can be divided into three classes. Some belong directly to *experience,* others manifest themselves to *reason,* and still others are known to us by *testimony.*

1. *Experience* may be internal or external. Internal experience, through the *inner sense* and *conscience,* reaches immediately our subjective modifications, the facts which are interior and personal to ourselves. External experience, through the *senses,* reveals to us the material world, the existence of bodies, their qualities, their accidents and combinations.

2. *Reason* elaborates the data furnished by the senses, seeks to penetrate the nature of things, from simple acts deduces universal, necessary, unchangeable truths; it proceeds from truth to truth, drawing conclusions from principles.

3. *Testimony* makes known to us beings and facts, which, separated from us by time and space, do not come under our personal experience.

Each of these means can bring us to *full certainty*. I am certain of the existence of my body, of the objects which I see and touch, in a word, of facts which fall under my own observation or experience. I am absolutely certain that every effect has a cause, that God exists, though these truths are outside of the limits of experience. I am equally certain of the achievements of Cæsar, of the existence of Rome, and of a multitude of facts of history, geography, natural sciences. Under penalty of acting unreasonably, I must admit these facts, because they are attested by testimonies worthy of confidence.

That which determines the adhesion of our intellect to a truth is *evidence*. But this evidence may be intrinsic, inherent to the truth itself; it may also be extrinsic, and in that case it may be called the evidence of *credibility*. Here it is well to give a further explanation. Certain truths come before the intellect illuminated with such a light that it is impossible not to admit them without abdicating in a sense its very nature. Such, for instance, is this first principle: a thing cannot at the same time be and not be. Other truths require, in order to be perceived, that they be supported by a long course of reasoning: many propositions of algebra and geometry belong to this class. But by the very fact that the intellect clearly sees the intimate connexion of these theorems with evident principles, the conclusion becomes self-evident. This is *intrinsic* evidence. Finally, there are truths which claim our assent without having this light. Whatever we may do, they remain surrounded by obscurity and mystery. But if men of irreproachable honesty assert that they have heard these truths from the very mouth of God Himself, if they speak without being influenced by any personal interest, and if for proclaiming and professing these truths they are persecuted and abused, and even confirm them by submitting to death itself, would it not be unreasonable to refuse assent to these truths?

Let us add an important observation. If the intrinsic evidence, with which certain metaphysical and mathematical truths shine forth, were required in other questions, in order to justify the assent of the intellect, there would be an end to historical, geographical, natural and other sciences, because these sciences rest upon knowledge acquired in great part by means of *testimony*. Where is the learned man who has verified for himself and by his own experience all the facts set forth in scientific works, and accepted by him as undoubted? Is there any man who, if he analyzes in good faith the basis of his convictions, would venture to assert that they all rest upon evidence clear of all obscurity?

If we except the questions treated in parts I and II of this work on God, and the human soul, nearly the whole subject of Christian apologetics depends for the demonstration of its truth on the testimony of authority. Of this fact our chief adversaries, the rationalists, are well aware; hence their attempt to nullify such demonstration by pretending that it is altogether unsatisfactory to any cultured mind, particularly when compared to the clear evidence supplied by science in behalf of its discoveries. For this reason it is most important for us to unmask their sophistic argument and vindicate the incontestable value of the testimony of authority in demonstrating the truths of religion. They tell us: "This is our justification for refusing assent to your Christian creed and the doctrines of your Church. True, we trust and accept the discoveries of science, but this is quite another thing. Science offers clear, visible, palpable demonstrations, which you fail to bring in the case of your dogmas. The invisible is not man's domain; on this account all arguments incapable of being submitted to the experimental test, with which science proves its discoveries and nature's laws, are altogether insufficient, and as such can carry no conviction to any intelligent, fair-minded man."

Our Answer. Our opponents take it for granted that no evidence is of any value, which is incapable of ocular and experimental proof. This, as logic teaches us, is a radically false principle, rejected by all sane philosophers, and directly

opposed to the common sense of mankind, who are daily acting in opposition to it. We may reach truth by two perfectly distinct methods, namely, by actual, experimental investigation, when the matter in question is capable of it, or by the testimony of external authority, either human or divine, as the case may be. This second method is, of course, essentially different from the first, though not less reliable as a means of ascertaining truth. The spiritual world and the world of matter are entirely distinct; therefore the method suitable to material things is found quite unsuitable to things spiritual. Thus the microscope and the telescope, eminently useful in their own sphere, can throw no light on the question of psychology, and much less on those of the supernatural, invisible world. Thus it is intrinsically impossible to prove by experimental processes and ocular observation the fact of divine revelation, the inspiration of Holy Scripture, the divine origin and institution of the Church of Christ and other similar supernatural truths. Truth intended for our acceptance, must come to us in a manner conformable to its nature. It is, therefore, evidently unreasonable to require, as a necessary condition of our Christian belief, that supernatural doctrines should be submitted to the observation and experiments, of which they are essentially incapable. Hence the principle of authority is a perfectly reliable criterion of truth. This is so true that for our knowledge of history, literature, biography, geography, the scientific records of the past, the data of natural sciences ascertained by former professors, we rely entirely upon the testimony of authors and writers that preceded us. To exclude all the truths which we are unable to verify by experiments or ocular demonstration, would be to rob us of ninety-nine hundredths of all the knowledge we can possess. We are saved from such consequences by the logic and common sense of mankind. When, therefore, it is question in our demonstrations of appealing to authority, our only need in evidence of this kind, is to satisfy ourselves that the authority we invoke is authentic, reliable, and, therefore, trustworthy. That such is the divine authority supporting all supernatural truths, will be duly shown in

parts IV and V of this volume dealing with the divine inspiration of Holy Scripture and the divinity of the Christian religion. (See Faith and Folly, by Bishop J. S. Vaughan, p. 44.)

Conclusion. We have seen that revelation is a fact of history. It is, therefore, by means of testimony that we should acquire a sure knowledge of revelation, and it is by testimony that we are enabled to demonstrate the foundations of faith and establish the divinity of the Christian religion.

"We have all of us a natural instinctive craving for the truth. It is what philosophers call the *proper object* of our intellects; that towards which they of their very nature tend, and by the possession of which they are perfected.

"When they possess it, they have rest. This is that repose of mind which absolute certainty produces, and which it alone can produce. The maximum of probability will not give absolute repose of mind; for the very fact of a thing being but *probable* implies that its opposite has something to say for itself, and that something is a disturbing element, and prevents absolute undoubting repose of mind.

"There are various degrees of certainty; but the lowest of them is not only higher than the greatest degree of probability, but it is an entirely different order. A thing must cease to be merely very or most probable, before it can be in any sense certain; for probability implies some uncertainty. The maximum of probability implies the minimum of uncertainty, but still that minimum remains, and while it remains there is not absolute repose of mind.

"I have said, 'There are various degrees of certainty'; and you may say, 'How can this be? How can certainty admit of degrees? A thing is either certain or it is not. It cannot be more than certain.' I answer, 'As far as all the degrees exclude doubt, they are all equal; but inasmuch as the *motives* whereby the doubt is excluded may be greater or less, more in number or fewer, so the certainty may be said to be greater or less.'

"For instance, I am absolutely certain, that is, I have no doubt whatever, that there is a country called Africa, although

I have never seen it; my mind is perfectly at rest as to the fact; it never occurs to me to inquire as to its truth; and I should not give heed to the words of anyone who denied it. The motive of my belief is—because all men say so. That is my major premiss; my minor is, but all men cannot be deceived, or deceive; they cannot all be supposed to have combined in one vast conspiracy to assert a falsehood; and my undoubting conclusion is, therefore, that there is a country called Africa. This is what is called *moral certainty.* This is the lowest kind of certainty, but still certainty. It excludes all doubt, and produces in my mind perfect repose.

"Again, I am absolutely certain that the sun will rise tomorrow morning; and the motive of my certainty is—the unfailing constancy of the laws of nature. This is what is called *physical certainty;* and it is higher than the other, because the motive is greater. But there is a higher certainty still. I am certain that twice two make four, and that the whole is greater than any of its parts. This is what is called *metaphysical certainty,* and it is the highest degree of natural certainty; and for this reason: such a thing as the universal deception, active or passive, of the world might be imagined; and there might be an interruption of the laws of nature, by their Lawgiver, the Creator of nature. Both are alike conceivable, being within the range of possibility. But such a thing as that twice two should make three or five, or that the whole should not be greater than its part, cannot be conceived as possible; it involves a contradiction. God Himself could not make it so. And this is no derogation from His omnipotence; for the impossible is not the object of, or within the sphere of, power.

"This, then, is what I mean by certainty—which excludes all doubt, and begets an absolute repose of the mind. And now I affirm that I have a greater degree of certainty with regard to truths of the supernatural order, than I have with regard to those truths of the natural order. I have a degree of certainty higher than even the metaphysical—the certainty of divine faith. It excludes all doubt, and begets in my mind absolute repose; what St. Paul calls the 'joy and peace of

believing.' I am more certain that there are Three distinct Divine Persons who are yet One God, that Mary was immaculately conceived, that her Son was the Eternal Word, and that the Holy Father is His Vicar and infallible, than I am that twice two make four.

"But what is the reason? Why is it that I hold all this with absolute certainty, and some of my readers may not, although those truths are equally before us, and we may be equal as to our powers of understanding and reason, in forming judgments and arriving at conclusions?

"The reason is not to be sought for in diversity of circumstances, or the difference of our antecedents, education, pursuits, temperament, or mental bias. These will account for much, but not for this.

"The reason is this; and I shall preface it by an illustration which will serve to explain it, and make my meaning clear:

"I see the crucifix now standing before me on my table as I write; and that because it is visible in itself, and I have the power of vision in my eyes; but, supposing the room were in darkness, I should no longer see it, although it would remain in itself equally visible, and I should have the power of vision in my eyes as much as before. The presence of light, then, is necessary to vision, and its absence precludes it. In the same way, the reason why I, in common with all Catholics, believe those and kindred truths, while you, in common with all who are not Catholics, do not believe them, or hold them with absolute certainty to the exclusion of all doubt, is because we have, by the goodness of God, and apart from any merit of our own, a grace which is called the Light of Divine Faith, while you as yet do not have it. It is not our believing those truths which invests them with truth, or makes them to be true; and your disbelief of them equally does not divest them of that truth which they objectively possess. They are true apart from all affirmation or belief on the one hand, and from all denial or disbelief on the other.

"Let me explain farther what I mean by this *light* of faith. God has given to His intelligent and rational creatures three

great spiritual lights; I say *spiritual* or *intellectual,* to distinguish them from the material light which affects the bodily eye.

"The first is the *light of intelligence or reason,* called otherwise the *light of nature.* It is by means of this light that I see clearly, for instance—that twice two make four, or that the whole is greater than its part. Those are facts within the sphere and compass of my intelligence and reason, which, illuminated by this natural light, apprehends them and holds them with absolute certainty. But take another fact which is asserted, that in God there are Three Persons, distinct and separate the one from the other, as to their personality, and yet identified with each other, and numerically one, as to their essence, substance, nature, power, will, operation, etc. To my reason, even with its natural light, this seems a paradox; and yet I believe it as firmly, and with as little doubt, as I do that twice two make four.

"And why? By reason of a superadded, supernatural light, *the light of divine faith*—a grace, a quality bestowed by my Maker on my soul, illuminated and fortified by which it can apprehend and embrace undoubtingly truths, which by no power of faculty, or force of nature, I can even have knowledge of, much less embrace.

"The third spiritual light bestowed by God is the *light of glory,* the correlative in the future of the light of grace in the present. By means of it we shall see God, behold Him intuitively, and no longer under veils. We shall see Him as He is. Now we walk by faith, then we shall walk by sight. But this last and greatest light does not immediately concern us now; what I wish to speak of is the Light of Faith.

"This gives absolute undoubting certainty. He who has it has perfect repose of mind, no disposition to inquire—he has no fear or suspicion of the possible truth of the opposite—and farther, no arguments will avail to persuade him of the truth of the opposite. Just as a clever mathematician might bring me a great number of seemingly irrefragable arguments, to persuade me that twice two make five, and I might fail to answer any one of them, or to see any answer, and yet I should

remain firm in my conviction, fully and firmly persuaded in my mind of the truth that twice two make four and retain my certainty unshaken and untouched; so also a clever controversialist might bring me an equal number of arguments against the truth of the Trinity, or the Immaculate Conception, or the Infallibility of the Holy Father, and, after all, I should remain in my certainty of belief as I was before.

"You may put this easily into practice. You may ply a Catholic with argument after argument against some truth of the Catholic religion. You may be clever and learned, and he may be ignorant and illiterate, and have not a word to say for himself; and yet you have not affected his belief. He is as certain as ever that his faith is right, and that your opinions are wrong. (St. Thomas, Cont. Gent. I, c. 7, note.)

"We have arrived, then, at this: 1. That the intellect tends of its nature towards the truth, and does not rest save in its possession. 2. That there are certain truths which it knows by the natural light with absolute certainty, and as to which it is at perfect rest, undisturbed by any doubt, without fear or suspicion of the opposite proving true, and not caring for, and never dreaming of inquiring farther. 3. That many men have equal, nay greater, certainty as to other truths which to reason appear at first sight paradoxical and contradictory. 4. That this is because they are not contrary to reason, but beyond its range and sphere, and therefore beyond the compass of its faculties and powers. 5. And that to have this knowledge and certainty, or, in other words, *belief,* the soul must have superadded to its natural endowments a supernatural quality which we have called the light of faith." (William Humphrey, S. J., "The Divine Teacher.")

148. Remarks. 1. According to the definition of the Vatican Council: "Faith is a supernatural virtue by which, with the aid and under the impulse of the grace of God, we believe to be true the things which He has revealed to us, not because we perceive their intrinsic truth by the natural light of reason, but because of the authority of God Himself, who reveals them to us and who cannot deceive nor be deceived." (Const. I, cap. iii.) Like every virtue, faith is the source of acts *free*

and meritorious before God. And yet faith is an act of the intellect, and the intellect is not a free faculty: its adherence is necessarily determined by evidence. In the beginning and development of the supernatural act of faith, a large part is left to free will, and on this account such an act is an homage rendered by human reason to divine wisdom.

It will not be without profit to point out one of the ways by which the free will of man intervenes in the act of faith. If we examine ourselves introspectively we shall see that very few truths are capable of producing certitude by such absolute evidence as would compel the assent of our reason.

There is, in fact, a vast amount of knowledge that we may rightfully call certain, without, however, finding in it the character of absolute evidence; it is true, there are things that offer bright sides, but they are also partly obscured by clouds. These obscurities weary and disconcert the intellect; hence its first impulse is to yield to a sentiment of pride and to reject a truth that does not reveal itself entirely to the human mind. It is then for the *will* to intervene and move the intellect to accept, in spite of its repugnance, non-evident truths which are, nevertheless, set forth with sufficient clearness so as not to leave room for reasonable doubt. We may here observe that this intervention of the will in the act of knowing is spontaneously produced in a multitude of cases. Who in the consideration of several particular facts would claim to be guided by complete and perfect evidence alone, excluding even the possibility of a groundless doubt? The attestation of the senses and the testimony of our fellow-beings are at every moment the starting-point for the most important resolutions. To admit nothing but what rests on absolute evidence, would be to condemn oneself to a most destructive skepticism.

The application of this principle to revealed truths is easy enough. As many of these truths are not evident by themselves, and as notwithstanding this, God requires of us the assent of our intellect, it is then the duty of the *will* to intervene to compel reason to admit them on the acknowledged testimony of God. Moreover, the fact of revelation, though attested with real, indubitable certitude, does not, neverthe-

less, possess such evidence as may compel assent, leaving no room for the intervention of good will, and suppressing all occasions of merit.

The necessity of this intervention of the will appears still more clearly when we think of the difficulties to be met with in lending the *firm and constant* assent required by divine revelation. In effect, to believe, man must often overcome the pride which revolts at the idea of accepting truths which reason cannot understand, and conquer the repugnance and dread of sensual passions, which rebel when confronted with the restrictions which the practical truths of faith claim to impose upon them, with the shameful tyranny of human respect and the fear of the dangers and sacrifices which the public profession of Catholicity requires. We can then easily understand that the human intellect and will actually need a *supernatural* help, that strength which in the Christian language is called grace, the light, the gift of faith. "To obtain this illumination and strength from above, the inquirer must pray, like the blind man by the wayside, who more and more cried out, 'Lord that I may see.' The light may be long in rising, for God's ways are not ours, but the Church teaches that it will be granted to all who pray earnestly, and place no obstacle to its reception by a sinful life. And when the ray of God's truth enters the soul, doubt and uncertainty disappear, and the convictions of faith succeed. There was one, who had long but vainly sought truth and certainty in the contending schools of philosophy, yet always believed that God would in the end give him light. At length his petition was granted and when Justin, the Martyr, for it was he, stood upon trial for the faith he had now confessed, 'Do you think,' asked the pagan prefect, 'that by dying you will enter heaven and be rewarded by your God?' 'I do not *think*,' he replied, 'I *know*,' and he thus repeated the Apostle's words, *'Scio cui credidi, et certus sum':* I know in whom I have believed, and I am certain." (II Tim. 1, 22. Hettinger, "Natural Religion," from the preface by Henry S. Bowden of the Oratory, pp. 31–32.)

2. It follows from what we have just said that we must be careful not to promise to unbelievers that we may furnish to them that *absolute* evidence which they so loudly demand. To do so would be to forget the essential conditions of Catholic faith. But what we may safely affirm is, in the first place, the fact of the perfect satisfaction which our dogmas, even the most mysterious, can give to the demands of the highest and most exacting reason. Hence arises our undoubted assertion of the authenticity, the integrity and the veracity of the Sacred Books and particularly of the Gospels, which are supported by an evidence as undeniable as that, at least, of other historical documents most worthy of belief. Finally, we will demonstrate further on the divine character of the Christian religion and of the Catholic Church, manifesting itself in all and each of the motives of credibility and appealing to reason in a most convincing manner through the cumulative force of all these motives. We may add that we can show with a certainty amounting to evidence that rationalistic unbelief is also largely contrary to reason, that it is the bane of its adepts and that it constitutes a most serious danger to individuals and society. What more can a reasonable man require? (See De Smedt, in "Précis historiques," Historical Notes, Feb., 1873; P. Bainvel, S. J., "La foi, et l'acte de foi," The Faith and the Act of Faith; Le Bachelet, "Apologétique traditionnelle et apologétique moderne," Traditional and Modern Apologetics.)

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PART IV

THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

149. A supernatural religion, as we have seen (n. 132) presupposes revelation, which, being an historical fact, must be proved by reliable *testimony*. But where shall we find irresistible testimony of the successive communications of God to man? We shall find it in those books which have been held during long centuries in exceptional and well-deserved veneration. They form a body which is called the Sacred Scriptures, or The Bible, that is to say, *The Book*, by way of eminence. The Holy Scriptures are divided into the Old and the New Testament. Let us enumerate the different parts of both.

150. The Old Testament. The Old Testament is composed of the inspired books written before the coming of Jesus Christ. They are forty-five in number, which may be divided into four classes.

1st. The *historical* books, which relate to the history of religion from the creation until the coming of Jesus Christ. The principal of these is the *Pentateuch of Moses*, comprising five books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It includes the time elapsed from the creation until the death of Moses. Then come the other historical books which take up the history from the entry into the Promised Land and lead up to the coming of Christ. They are: the books of Joshua, Judges, the four books of the Kings, the two books of Paralipomena or Chronicles, the

two books of Esdras, of which the second bears also the name of Nehemias, and the two books of the Machabees. Besides these books of general history, there are five books which contain particular history: these are the books of Job, Ruth, Tobias, Judith and Esther.

2d. The books of *praise* or song, addressed to the Deity. These are the Psalms and the Canticle of Canticles.

3d. The books of *morals*, which give rules for the guidance of life. These are the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus.

4th. The books of the Prophets, which reprove the people for their vices, predict the punishments threatening them, and especially announce the coming of the Messiah. The prophets were sixteen in number. The four principal prophets, Isaias, Jeremias (with Baruch), Ezechiel and Daniel, are called the Great Prophets, because of the importance of their works. The others, to whom, from their books of less extent, has been given the name of Minor Prophets, are Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zacharias and Malachias.

151. The New Testament. The New Testament is composed of the inspired books written after the coming of Jesus Christ and during the time of the Apostles. It comprises twenty-seven books, divided into four categories.

1st. *The Gospels*, which contain the history of the life and preaching of Jesus Christ, His doctrine, death and resurrection. There are four of these, bearing the names of their authors: St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke and St. John.

2d. *The Acts of the Apostles*, which recount the first conquests of Christianity as it appeared in the world. This narrative, written under divine inspiration by the evangelist St. Luke, a disciple of St. Paul, extends to the first imprisonment of the latter in Rome.

3d. *The Epistles*, or letters of the Apostles, written to different churches, and even to particular persons, to give advice and instruction. They comprise fourteen of St. Paul, three of St. John, two of St. Peter, one of St. James and one of St. Jude.

4th. *The Apocalypse,* or Revelations, made to St. John in the island of Patmos.

Point of view from which we here consider the Sacred Scriptures. In the eyes of a Catholic, all the books just enumerated possess a sacred character, because they are held by the Church as divinely inspired, that is to say, dictated by the Holy Spirit to the Biblical writers, and having therefore God as their author. But it is not under this aspect that we are now studying them. The apologist, whose object is to prove to reason that it must believe, because the Christian religion has in its favor undeniable proofs of truth, cannot set up as the basis of his argument inspiration, which would suppose on the part of his hearers faith in and acknowledgment of the infallibility of the Church. We shall, therefore, at present make complete abstraction from the inspiration of the sacred books and concern ourselves only with their *historic value;* we shall act as if we were speaking of the "Commentaries" of Cæsar or the "Annals" of Tacitus. Do those sacred books merit, as historical documents, our full and entire confidence? This is the problem before us.

We assert that, considered in this respect, the Old and the New Testament possess such an authority that to call them in question would be to deny all certainty to history. We shall, in the first place, prove this assertion as to the *Pentateuch,* the most important of the historical books of the Old Testament, which contains the account of the creation, the fall of man, etc. We shall afterwards do likewise with the Gospels, the fundamental historic basis of Christian revelation. The other books of Scripture are of much less importance to us in the present study.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE PENTATEUCH

152. Preliminary Observation. In order that an historical book should possess complete authority, and thus commend itself to our acceptance, three conditions are necessary. Such a book should be:

1st. *Authentic,* that is to say, written by the author to whom the work is attributed, or, if the author be doubtful or unknown, written at the time assigned to it.

2d. *Intact,* that is to say, that it should have reached us the same as it left the author's pen, without having undergone any substantial alterations as to the main part of the history.

3d. *Veracious.* The moral qualities of the author and the circumstances that accompanied the production of the book, should place it above every suspicion of error or falsehood.

When an historical work meets those three conditions no reasonable man can refuse to admit as certain the facts therein related. Such are the books which form the Sacred Scriptures.

§ I. Authenticity of the Pentateuch

THESIS.—The Pentateuch is the work of Moses, the lawgiver of the Hebrews.

153. First Argument. The authenticity of the Pentateuch is superabundantly proven:

1st. By the traditional testimony, as unanimous as it is constant, of the Jews, ancient and modern. At all time since its going out of Egypt, the *whole people* had these books in their hands, and always maintained that they were the work of Moses, who had brought them out of the bondage of Egypt. Moreover, all the *sacred writers* of that nation, from Moses to Jesus Christ, cite or presuppose the Pentateuch as being the work of Moses; their manner of speaking shows that they had no doubt about that point. This also applies to the profane or secular historians of that nation, as Philo (A.D. 100) and Flavius Josephus (A.D. 96), and to the Talmudists and rabbis. And finally, *in our own day,* the Jews, who by a phenomenon exceptional in history, and by a special Providence, continue to exist, though dispersed among the nations of the earth, attest the same thing, though these books condemn them.

2d. By the testimony of the *Samaritans,* who, despite their deep hatred of the Jews, kept the Pentateuch, and never ceased to expect the Messiah; from this we must conclude that at the moment of the separation of the ten tribes, about one thousand years before Christ, the authenticity of this book must have been uncontested and universally acknowledged.

3d. By the testimony of a *crowd of writers of other nations* of pagan antiquity, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, etc., who accepted the Pentateuch as being the work of Moses and as containing his legislation. Celsus (A.D. 300), Porphyrius (A.D. 304) and Julian the Apostate (A.D. 363), themselves, despite the interest they had in denying authenticity to this book, have never accused the Jews or Christians of basing their doctrines upon apocryphal documents.

4th. By the testimony of Jesus Christ, the writers of the New Testament and permanent Apostolic Tradition. Our Divine Savior speaks of Moses in sixteen passages of the Gospel. In two of them (John 3, 14; 6, 32), He refers to important events and predictions in Exodus, and to certain prescriptions of the Pentateuch in Matt. 8, 4; Mark 7, 10; Luke 20, 37; John 7, 22–23. When, after His Resurrection, Christ conversed with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus *"Beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things that were concerning Him."* (Luke 24, 27.) Finally, in St. John (5, 45–47) He appeals to the writings of Moses as giving testimony of His person, and He added, if the Jews, who heard Him, really believed in Moses, they ought to believe also in Him, because Moses wrote of Him. His Apostles and disciples bore similar testimony to the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch as shown in their writings (Luke 16, 31; Acts 3, 22; 15, 21; 26, 22; 28, 23; Rom. 5, 5–19). The Fathers and Doctors of the Church, the interpreters and commentators of the Bible have never differed on this point: and the Council of Trent has been the faithful echo of the traditional belief of the Church by naming Moses in the canon of Scripture as the author of the first five books

of the Bible, a belief which the Church had inherited from the Synagogue: a definition confirmed by the Vatican Council, canon 4th De Revelatione, and the decision of the Biblical Commission approved by the Pope, June 27, 1906. (See Thein, "Bible and Rationalism," pt. 1.)

These *extrinsic* proofs, based upon testimony, are amply sufficient to prove the character of this book, for if we admit upon testimony the authenticity of the Æneid of Virgil and the Philippics of Demosthenes, we cannot reasonably reject the authenticity of the Pentateuch, attested as it is by witnesses as numerous as they are unexceptionable. (See Cornely, S. J., "Compendium Introductionis in S. Scripturam," pp. 3–4.) Let us, however, add other arguments of equally high import; in the first place, an *intrinsic* proof, that is to say, an argument taken from the text itself of the work minutely studied.

Second Argument. Everything contained in the Pentateuch concerning religion, history, geography, politics, morals and customs, shows the great antiquity of this book, and is found to be in full accord with the character of the times when Moses lived. Thus, everything that is related of Egypt, at the time of the sojourn of the Hebrews in that country and their going out (Exodus), is in perfect agreement with the state of that country under the Rameses dynasty, quite different from what it was subsequently, for instance, during Solomon's time, or at the time of the prophets. What we say further on in Chap. III, on the subject of *modern discoveries* in Egypt and Assyria, is enough to show that this accuracy and exactness, even as to the smallest detail, requires an author contemporaneous with the events themselves and inhabiting the country of which he speaks. The study of *language* leads to the same conclusion. Without entering now into details, we shall simply say that by their inimitable character of poetry, originality and simplicity, the books of Moses create the impression of an exceptional antiquity.

Third Argument. It is a question here of a book at once national and religious, the book which contains the legislation of the Jewish people, the body of their laws, religious, politi-

cal, civil and military; the book on which are modeled the religion, the government, the habits of this nation. It is absolutely impossible that such a book should be apocryphal. As well say that the world has falsely attributed to Napoleon (A.D. 1821) the code which bears his name, or the constitution of the Belgian people to the National Congress of 1830, or the Declaration of Independence to the United States in 1776.

§ II. Integrity of the Pentateuch

154. First Argument. We must observe at the outset that almost all the arguments employed to prove the authenticity of the Pentateuch may be invoked to prove also its integrity, in the sense at least that nothing substantial has been added to it. But special arguments are not wanting. Studies undertaken upon this point, especially those of Kennicot on 581 manuscripts, and those of J. B. de Rossi on 825 others, prove that we possess in its fullness and integrity the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. It has moreover been found impossible to produce any indication capable of invalidating the constant and public tradition of the Jews, concerning the integrity of the Sacred Book.

Second Argument. A material alteration would even have been impossible.

(*a*) As this book constituted the fundamental principles of the life of the Jews, any substantial alteration made in it would have necessarily produced corresponding changes in the belief, habits, laws and customs of the people, a fact that could not have failed to provoke the loudest protest on their part if it had occurred. (See Bossuet, "Discours sur l'histoire universelle," 1704, Discourse on Universal History, II, 2.)

(*b*) According to the testimony of Flavius Josephus, the Pentateuch was so familiar to the Jews that they even knew how many times each letter was repeated in the volume. "No one," says he, "was daring enough to modify the Scriptures in the slightest degree. We consider them divine, we so call them; we profess to observe them inviolably,

and are ready to die with joy, if need be, to maintain them."

(*c*) After the separation of the ten tribes (962 B.C.), the implacable hatred of the Samaritans against the Jews rendered any changes utterly impossible.

(*d*) Finally, we have a further guarantee in the Greek translation of the Septuagint, which was made, according to the most probable opinion, by order of the king of Egypt, Ptolemy Philadelphus, and which spread throughout the world as early as the year 277 B.C., that is to say, long before the *fulfilling of the prophecies concerning the Messias.*

§ III. Veracity of the Pentateuch

155. Moses is veracious, if he was not mistaken himself, and if he did not intend to deceive. The demonstration will be more than sufficient if we can further prove that he could not have deceived.

1. Moses *was not mistaken.*

(*a*) As to the facts *happening in his own day,* the events related in the four last books of the Pentateuch, Moses was in a perfect condition to know them; he was speaking of visible, tangible facts, and these of great importance, in which he himself bore a conspicuous part, was as an agent and a witness, and which he himself had prepared, directed and accomplished.

(*b*) He derived the sure knowledge of *previous* events from a living tradition, whose preservation was aided by the longevity of men in the early times. If the Christian can with reason attribute to a Providential intervention the perfect preservation of the patriarchal traditions, he labors under no necessity of having recourse to miracles to account for it. The facts related by Moses were well known and of the greatest importance; as to many of them their memory was perpetuated, according to the custom of the time, in songs and canticles, inscriptions and monuments.

One of the most striking facts narrated by Moses in the fifth chapter of Genesis is the longevity of the antediluvian Patriarchs from Adam to Lamech, the father of Noah, a

period of about 1056 years. Several reasons have been assigned by different writers to account for that extraordinary phenomenon. Some attributed it to the notable temperament, physical constitution, frugality and excellent quality of the fruits, which then formed the principal sustenance of their lives. But other commentators, without denying the partial influence of the above causes or motives, have assigned a far more reasonable explanation by saying that the wonderful longevity of those early inhabitants of our globe was due to a special disposition of Providence. God so ordained it for the transmission and preservation, through living witnesses, of the primitive Revelation and religious traditions regarding divine worship, the belief in a future Redeemer, and man's supernatural destiny.

Taking as a basis of our calculation the age of each of the successive ten Patriarchs, as given in the Latin Vulgate, we find how easy it must have been, during those early times, to transmit to posterity the leading truths of divine revelation made to Adam, the head of the human race. This appears quite evident when we consider that Adam talked with Seth 800 years; with Enos 695 years; with Cainan 605 years; with Malaleel 535 years; with Jared 470 years; with Henoch 308 years; with Mathusala 243 years; with Lamech, the father of Noah 56 years.

Some rationalists, bent on discrediting the historical authority of the Bible, among them the author of the impious book "Horus," did not hesitate to accuse Moses of blundering with his figures about the age of Patriarchs by reckoning as solar years what were simply lunar months, a fact that would considerably reduce their incredible, nay absurd longevity, and bring it within reasonable limits. This novel rationalistic calculation, instead of making the patriarchal age more reasonable, makes it actually ridiculous and absurd. In fact, if their theory of lunar months is adopted, it would follow that those old Patriarchs began to beget children long before reaching the age of puberty. Several of them would have attained the dignity of paternity at 6 years of age, and Lamech would have become the father of Noah at the age

of five. Both St. Augustine and St. Jerome prove that the patriarchal years did not differ from the ordinary solar years of twelve months. (See Vigouroux, "Dictionnaire de la Bible," IV, col. 358.) We conclude this question by reproducing the words of Flavius Josephus, universally acknowledged as the most competent and trustworthy authority in the history of the Jewish people, to which race he himself belonged. He writes "Let no one, upon comparing the lives of the ancients with the few years, which we now live, think that what I have said of them is false. Now I have for witnesses all those that have written antiquities both among the Greeks and barbarians. The Egyptian Manetho, the Chaldean Berosus and others who all agree to what I have said, are reckoned among the oldest historians." (Josephus Flavius, "Antiquities of the Jews," I, 3.)

2. Moses *did not wish to deceive.*

(*a*) History and tradition agree in representing Moses as a man of sterling virtue, of strict good faith, and of irreproachable impartiality. His sincerity has always inspired the utmost confidence, to such an extent that his book has been the rule of life for the Jewish people.

(*b*) *His writings themselves* bear the imprint of sincerity, of the strictest uprightness; his style displays the calm good faith of a writer who has no fear of contradiction; it is simple, exempt from affectation, exaggeration, flattery and excessive enthusiasm. Nowhere does the author conceal or palliate the faults of his ancestors and relatives, nor the evil inclinations of the people, nor his own weaknesses, nor the chastisements which were inflicted on both. Everywhere we see that he thinks only of relating what his contemporaries knew as well as himself.

3. *Moses could not have deceived.*

(*a*) The facts which he related, and of which he was the agent or witness, were mostly public, striking and of the greatest importance; on them were founded the political and religious legislation of the nation and the authority which Moses claimed for himself; he describes these events, not in a vague and general way, but in all their details, with desig-

nation of times and persons; he sets them down as they occur and for the very people who were their witness and object, and he appeals to the testimony of his contemporaries and to that of the whole nation. "*Remember,*" says he, "*the great things which your eyes have seen. You have seen with your own eyes all the marvels which the Lord had accomplished.*" (Deut. 4, 3; 8, 2; 11, 7.) If these facts had been false, how does it happen that the Jews, inclined as they were to murmur against their liberator, did not raise the slightest outcry, especially when this writer imposed upon them, in the name of God, duties most painful and onerous to their carnal natures?

Even the feasts of the Jews, religious and civil, as the feasts of Easter, Pentecost, the Tabernacles, the Atonement, the ceremonies in use among them, as that of redeeming the first-born; their sacred canticles, going back to the time of Moses, attest for all time the prodigies which signalized their deliverance (Exodus) from the Egyptian captivity, the publication of the law on Mount Sinai, the sojourn in the desert, and all the great miracles performed in their behalf by the ministry of Moses.

(*b*) The events of which he was neither the agent nor the witness must have been still vivid in the memory of the whole people. Nothing equals the care and fidelity with which Eastern peoples preserve and transmit the records of the great deeds of their ancestors. It would have been impossible for Moses to add or retrench anything from these popular traditions, without wounding the most cherished feelings of the people, rousing most energetic protests and transgressing his own warning. (Deut. 4, 2.)

CHAPTER II

THE PENTATEUCH AND SCIENCE

156. "Science," says Joseph de Maistre, "is a kind of acid that dissolves all metals except gold." Only that which is divine can resist the attacks of modern criticism. Surely,

it is not attacks that have been wanting to Christianity; if it remains standing without the loss of any of the dogmas which it professes, or of facts, of which it is the warrant, it is because Christianity comes from Heaven, as it claims and proves. In our age especially, all the sciences have been resorted to with a view to overthrow the rock on which it rests, but far from discovering flaws in the veracity of the Mosaic account, the labors of learned men only confirm it.

More than once indeed scientific discoveries have at first sight seemed to contradict the sacred texts; but when, by dint of labor, the pioneers of science have penetrated deeper into the unknown, these alleged contradictions have been dissipated, and the truth of the Sacred Books has shone with greater brilliancy. Catholics cannot be surprised at this. We have the certainty that there can be no real antagonism between *faith and science*. The reason of this is plain, and we have already touched upon it (n. 141): it is that God, the Creator of all things, is at the same time the Lord of Sciences and the Author of Revelation. Whatsoever the means by which He communicates the truth, whether He makes it known directly to man or whether He reveals it by degrees from time to time, through the instrumentality of reason, to the laborious investigations of science, God cannot be in disagreement with Himself; never, therefore, can true science give the lie to revelation.

But we cannot be satisfied with this summary statement, and this all the more from the fact that there are objections drawn from geology, palæontology, biology and other sciences concerning which much noise has been made, and which have become for some souls a cause of spiritual ruin or a stumbling-block in their search after religious truth. Hearing it everywhere repeated that science is in conflict with revelation and that modern discoveries have demonstrated the impossibility of miracles and proved the absurdity of Christian dogmas, many men have ended by being weakened in their religious beliefs. It is important that the Catholic youth should in their own interest have an enlightened faith, and that for the sake of others they should be in a position to show the

hollowness of these lying assertions; they must be able to refute the specious objections put forth, and in this manner guard their brethren against the evil influences of prejudices, that are an obstacle to their acquiring the truth. It is for this reason that we shall examine the principal difficulties which have been raised in the name of science against the Mosaic account of the formation and the age of the world, the work of the six days, the antiquity of man, etc. We shall show that modern discoveries, in as far as to the facts, which are considered as certain in the light of true science, leave revealed truths and the proofs of revelation absolutely intact and impregnable. But before doing this a few general remarks are necessary. They will serve clearly to determine the respective positions of the Holy Scriptures and the sciences with regard to each other.

In the first part of this work (n. 40), we stated what occurred in England at the meeting of the British Association, held in the year 1865, when 617 Christian scientists in a manifesto, duly signed by them all, declared their belief not only in the truth and authority of Holy Scripture, but also in its harmony with natural science. It is gratifying to know that, notwithstanding the prevalence, in some quarters, of militant rationalism on the part of some university professors, the example set by the conservative English scientists mentioned above is in our times imitated by a large number of their successors both English and American. In Part I (n. 53) we disproved the assertion of certain rationalists to the effect that modern leading men of science are irreligious and anti-christian, and there we quoted the contrary statements written by hundreds of scientific men in answer to the question put to them by Mr. Arthur H. Tabrum. A few years later the same English writer desired to ascertain whether, with the subsequent advance of science, any radical change had taken place in the scientific mind. He wrote, therefore, to the modern representatives of science requesting an answer to this question: "Is there any real conflict between the *facts* of science and the *fundamentals* of Christianity?"

The question advisedly read, the *facts*, not the theories of

science: and the *fundamentals,* not the private, individual views of Christianity. What has been the result? Many were the replies, all forcibly rejecting the charge of any disaccord between the discoveries of science and the Bible. Lack of space prevents us from giving more than a few specimens of the replies.

Dr. Gerald Leighton of Edinburgh, Scotland, wrote: "I do not believe that there can be any opposition between the essential teachings of Christianity and the teachings of the facts of Science."

Sir Ray Lancaster in his British Association address at York, in the year 1916, said: "It is not true that there is an essential antagonism between the scientific spirit and, what is called, Religious Faith."

Professor George Carpenter, of the Royal College of Science, Dublin, answered: "There is no conflict between the fundamental teachings of Christianity and the established facts of Natural Science."

Then Mr. Tabrum, in his book "The Religious Beliefs of Scientists," gives the names and biography of 136 distinguished scientists, among them several Americans, who are unanimous in asserting their conviction that belief in Christianity and the Bible is in full harmony with true, real progress of Scentific investigators. (n. 40.)

Dr. Orestes Brownson wisely remarks: "Professor Draper, in his recent work, proposes to give the history of the conflict between religion and science or of a conflict that has never occurred, and never can occur. A conflict between science and superstition or various mythologies there may have been, and also between so called scientists and some individual theologian; but between religion and science, never. Such a conflict is impossible, for religion and science are simply two parts of one dialectical whole. Truth never can be in conflict with itself. Religion if religion is true, and science if science is true; how then is it possible that there can be any conflict between them?" (Brownson, "Works," Vol. IX, p. 547.)

It is gratifying to be able to confirm the views expressed

above by a very high authority, that of the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas, who speaks thus: "The natural dictates of reason must certainly be quite true: it is impossible to think of their being otherwise. Nor again is it permissible to believe that the tenets of faith are false, being so evidently confirmed by God. Since, therefore, falsehood alone is contrary to truth, it is impossible for the truth of faith to be contrary to principles known by natural reason." (Contra Gent. I, 7.) In other words, as the same God, who is the Author of reason, is the revealer of faith, there can be no possible conflict between reason and faith, because God, essential and immutable truth, cannot contradict Himself by revealing doctrines opposed to the dictates of reason.

157. First Remark. *The Sacred Scripture is in nowise a scientific book.* It even asserts that God has given up the world to the discussions of men. (Eccl. 3, 2.) Even where it touches upon phenomena that are the proper objects of science, its purpose is not to solve the problems of geology or astronomy, but simply to teach *the truths of faith,* to set forth *the facts of religion* and the duties that flow from them. Thus, when Moses speaks of the creation of the world, he merely intends to announce and affirm the dogma of divine creation respecting all classes of beings; to establish in this way the foundations of religion and the obligation of the weekly rest. He does not in the least intend to teach natural history, to formulate any complete theory of the formation of the earth, to describe scientifically the successive transformations of the globe we inhabit. Hence it results that when we interpret the Scriptures, it is under this *doctrinal and religious aspect* that we must regard them, and not with the view of finding answers destined to solve the questions discussed by the learned.

Second Remark. However, if the Spirit of truth did not intend to teach secular science, It could not, on the other hand, have inspired any erroneous proposition, even concerning a subject foreign to dogma or morals, nor allow the inspired writer to hold and teach such a proposition. The Scriptures could not therefore set forth as *true* things that

might in any future time be found to be false by science. (See Encyclical of Leo XIII on the Sacred Scriptures, 1893.)

But if the sacred writer never errs as to the *precise* purport of his statements, some difficulty may arise from the fact of his using expressions, metaphors, figures *scientifically* inexact if taken in their rigorous sense, but perfectly conformable to the genius of the language, which he was using, as well as to the mental habits of the people whom he was addressing. An example will explain our thought.

When Joshua writes that the battle of Gabaon was to be continued to the very end, owing to the *miraculous* prolongation of the light of day (probably due to a local modification of the atmosphere) he relates a fact quite certain as to its occurrence. But in order to be understood by the people, he used, in stating this fact, an expression borrowed from popular language, which gives most clearly the meaning he wished to convey. He says that the sun was stopped in its course. In borrowing the language of appearances he only did what is being done every day, even now, by the greatest scientists, and even by the Bureau of Longitudes, and generally in the publications and reports of astronomical observatories. Notwithstanding the progress of astronomy, everyone still continues to say that the sun rises, passes the meridian, goes down, etc. It matters little, at all events, whether the inspired writer knew the exact truth in this matter as known to-day or not.

The illustrious astronomer, Kepler (A.D. 1630) speaking of that astounding miracle "*when the sun stood still in the midst of heaven*" (Joshua 10; Eccl. 46, 5) says: "Holy Scripture teaches sublime truths, but that they may be understood it makes use of ordinary, familiar terms. It is only incidentally that the sacred writers speak of the phenomena of nature, and when they do, they employ terms familiar to the generality of men. We ourselves, astronomers as we are, do not attempt to change the tenor of our language whilst we are endeavoring to complete and perfect the knowledge of astronomy; we speak exactly as do the common people: the sun rises, it passes the meridian, it has gone down; with

the people we state that which seems to pass before our eyes, though nothing in it be true. We should demand this precision of language from the Scriptures all the less from the fact that, were we to abandon ordinary language and use only that of science, it would confuse the simple-minded faithful and would not attain the sublime end purposed." Arago (A.D. 1853) speaks in the same sense in his "Astronomie populaire" (Popular Astronomy), Vol. 3, p. 23.

It will not be amiss to say here a few words concerning a Biblical fact which has been the favorite object of the scorn and mockeries of certain men of our times as it did, long ago, provoke the scoff and ridicule of the pagans of Africa, to whom St. Augustine replied. This is the history of Jonah. This fact is evidently miraculous, for the prophet could not *naturally live* three days in the dark prison into which he was cast and from which he was thrown out upon the beach safe and sound; but, as St. Augustine observes, this fact is not more marvelous than the preservation of the three young Hebrews in the midst of the flames in the furnace, and it is quite as easy for God to preserve a man alive in the belly of a marine monster as to raise him from the dead. Besides this miracle, must we admit a second one in the *swallowing* of Jonah? Yes, if the monster that swallowed him was really a whale, for the esophagus of this mammal is too narrow to allow a man to pass through it. But the Hebrew text, which is the original text, does not describe the monster. It says simply that it was a great fish; this term in its common acceptance comprises all marine monsters without exception, cetaceans as well as fish properly so called. The word used in the Septuagint version is not more precise. This is the opinion of the best commentators, Jews and Protestants as well as Catholics. It seems preferable to suppose a fish of the kind *Pristis,* represented in the frescoes of the Catacombs and monuments of the first centuries, or, perhaps better still, of the family of *Squales,* or dogfish of the shark family (*Carcharias*), or the Lamia, or white shark (*Lama Cornubica*). This kind of fish had always lived in the Mediterranean; some of them are of such enormous proportions

that they could easily swallow a man without injuring him; instances of this nature are not wanting.

Third Remark. Scientific men have no reason to complain that they have been interfered with by Catholic theology in their scientific studies, and in particular in their researches. concerning the formation of the world. The man of faith is perfectly free and at ease on this point, quite as much as he who has not the happiness of believing. Far from barring the way to science, the Church allows, on the contrary, full liberty to progress and advance in the vast domain, which God has left to its researches; it applauds its efforts, being certain in advance that the discoveries of science can only confirm revealed truths. Moreover, the glorious testimony of her annals in the past is there to prove that at all times the Church has been the enlightened protector of true science. (See Part X: "Influence of the Church on Letters and Sciences.") It is only quite recently that Leo XIII has proclaimed that "the Church does not forbid the sciences to labor, each in its own sphere making use of the principles and methods which are peculiar to each," and he affirms that there is no conflict to be feared, provided that they confine themselves to their own legitimate domain, without invading that of philosophy and of divine faith.

"Religion," says Mgr. Freppel in the closing session of the Scientific Congress of Paris, 1891, "does not in any way tend to fetter human sciences in their normal and regular development; nor does it pretend to pronounce a doctrinal judgment on the merits of a literary or oratorical work. It is hardly necessary to say that the Church has received from its Divine Founder no revelation either as to the properties of bodies or the relations of distance or volume which may exist between the stars. In other words, we may safely say that there is no revealed astronomy, nor medicine, nor chemistry, nor physics; these are natural sciences, which by their own and specific object depend upon themselves and cannot borrow from theology either the laws which should govern them or the method which may make them advance."

And, indeed, these conflicts can only come from two

sources: the pretensions of certain *scientific men* themselves who offer their hypotheses as the irreformable decrees of *science* itself, and the imprudence of some commentators of the Bible, who advance as revealed truth their personal interpretation of the sacred text.

It is not to this or that interpreter, but to the Church alone that it belongs to formulate as obligatory dogmatic interpretations. On the other hand, we see but too often men learned, indeed, but blinded by hatred of the supernatural, abandon the domain of facts and experience, and build up theories *a priori* which only show one thing: the desire of the author to destroy, if he could, all religious belief. Assuredly we do not deny to learned men the right to devise hypotheses with the view of finally reaching assured conclusions; we merely will not allow them to set up conclusions against us as long as they are only hypotheses.

Fourth Remark. Moreover, biblical statements, relating the facts about which science concerns itself and for which the Church requires respect, are *very few in number.* The reason for this is simple and flows from what we have previously said: being a religious and not a scientific book, the Bible refers to the phenomena of nature only to teach men that which concerns their faith and conduct.

Fifth Remark. That upon any point which touches upon the study of nature there might be a conflict between the Bible and science, the three following conditions would be required: *First,* the precise meaning of the Scripture should be absolutely certain, either because the sense is altogether clear in itself or because it had been determined by the infallible authority of the Church; *secondly,* it would be necessary that the pronouncement or verdict of science be *indisputable,* admitted by all truly competent and authorized judges; *thirdly,* there should be absolute *incompatibility* between the real sense of the Bible and the evident results obtained by true science. These three conditions have never been met with, and they will never be met with together at the same time.

158. First condition: Apart from the dogmatic decisions

of the Church, it is not easy to determine the *literal* sense of the Bible in the passages which refer to the natural sciences. We speak especially of the account of the creation of the world given by Moses in the first chapter of Genesis, because it is the principal source of objections made against the Bible.

Undoubtedly, full certitude must be accorded to the interpretation of Scripture texts, when it rests upon the unanimous consent, at least *morally,* of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church; but for this it is necessary: Firstly, that the Fathers propose to the faithful their interpretation as reproducing that of the Church herself, and as such binding on all her members, because referring to things belonging to the domain of faith and morals, according to the definition of the Councils of Trent and of the Vatican. Then, and then only, these Fathers and Doctors speak with the authority of faith, because in such a case their teaching represents or manifests the authentic teaching of the Church *universal,* which has received from Jesus Christ the privilege of infallibility. Beyond these circumstances we are in no way bound to subscribe to the peculiar *scientific* views advocated by the ancient Fathers. In their works of the exegesis, or interpretation of Holy Writ, they took the tenets of the several sciences, such as they were held and taught in their times; and in the explanation of Scripture we are as free as they were to take advantage of all the progress made by science in our times. From what we have just said, it follows that we have great liberty as regards the explanation of the Mosaic account of the work of creation and the formation of the earth. In reality, this account has received on the part of the Fathers of the Church and the interpreters of the sacred text the most diverse, not to say the most opposite, interpretation. It is a fundamental principle in Hermeneutics, or the science of biblical interpretation, that in things left by God and by the Church to free discussion, every thinker must be careful not to give his private interpretation as the absolute and only true meaning of the Bible.

Second condition: That a conflict be possible, it would be

necessary that the *scientific* statements should be evidently established and beyond all doubt. Now, in most of the sciences which our opponents pretend to invoke against the Bible, we seek in vain for positive certitude. To be convinced of this, we have only to consider the number and variety of the *scientific* systems which have successively claimed preeminence, denouncing all others as absurd. When the science of geology first appeared, and one hypothesis succeeded the other with astounding rapidity, the adversaries of religion vainly attempted to make them bear testimony against the truth of the Bible. The sciences of geology and paleontology, in particular, in spite of the remarkable progress they have made of late, cannot claim as axioms, or as thoroughly established truths, deductions and theories yet uncertain, and which are simply possible, hypotheses that are not as yet fully verified. This prudence or precaution is all the more necessary from the fact that, especially as to geology, theories change with a rapidity which has become quite proverbial.

Third condition: After all we have said, it would be useless to enlarge upon the third condition. It is self-evident. If the biblical text means a certain thing, if the scientific fact is undoubted, it would be necessary, in order to have a contradiction, that there should be *absolute* incompatibility between them. As we have already said: this is not the case, we shall now proceed to the proof.

§ I. The Bible and Geology

I. The Work of the Six Days, or the Hexaëmeron

159. Geology is the science which has for its immediate object the structure of the terrestrial globe, the different mineral strata which form the crust; it undertakes to perform the anatomy of this immense skeleton. As the present condition of our planet is the last of a series of transformations which have successively unfolded themselves in the course of centuries, each one of them has left indelible traces on the surface of the globe or in its depths; it is the function of

geology to reconstruct the successive phases through which the earth has passed, and in this way to write the history of the earth.

160. Remarks. 1. The question of the *origin* of the world is quite different from that of its *formation,* different also from the work of the six days. The first only refers to the *instant* at which the *universe* issued from nothingness, that is to say, the act by which from non-existence it passed into existence; the second concerns the *primitive transformations* or the evolutions of that first matter, the atomic elements, starting from the moment, when physical and chemical forces began to operate; the *third* refers to the special *organization* of the earth, destined to be the home of man. The first question does not belong to the domain of geology; hence science can barely give negative answers about it.

2. As to the question of the *origin* of the world, no conflict need be feared between faith and science. Scripture, it is true, expresses itself on this point in the most categorical manner: it says that it is God who *created* everything, the first *matter* and the *laws* which govern its successive transformations. True science can have nothing to oppose to this teaching. The reason is evident; the question of *origin* is necessarily beyond our natural and ordinary means of investigation. This is what the most competent men acknowledge. "Experimental science," says the illustrious Pasteur, "can never enter into the discussion of the essence of things, of the origin of the world and of its destinies." "Science," says also M. Berthelot, "has nothing to do with first causes, nor with the end of things. . . . To lead to assured results, science establishes facts by observation and experience, it analyzes and compares them, it draws inferences, that is to say, more general facts, the physical laws that regulate their occurrence, which, in their turn—and this is the sole guarantee of their reality—must be verified by observation and experience." This is, or ought to be, the language of all truly learned men, of those who wish to be faithful to the method of observation, experience and instruction, which alone can lead to certitude. In reality, almost all scientific

men in our day have no objection to avow their ignorance as to the origin of things, and especially as to the origin of life.

3. If, therefore, the question of the origin of the world is absolutely outside of the domain of natural science, that of the *first transformations,* which it underwent, is fully within its competence. In searching the depths of the heavens in investigating the laws that govern the movements of the celestial globes, in studying in particular the sun and our planetary system, we can, by means of right inductions, ascend very high in the history of the transformations of primordial matter. But whatever may be the result of the researches of science, there is no conflict to be feared, because the Bible does not *concern itself* about this question. Moses in fact gives no theory of this first formation of the world. As to the necessity of a *Creator,* this remains evident, no matter what theory scientists may adopt, the existence of primitive matter, of the forces which gave it activity, of the laws that presided at its evolution, evidently require a cause all powerful and intelligent which cannot be other than the action of God. (n. 24.)

After having in the first verse of Genesis spoken in general of the creation of the first matter, then mentioned the chaotic condition of the earth, Moses passes to describe the organization and adaptation of this globe, destined to serve as the habitation of the intelligent and free creatures for whom he writes. He seems to divide this organization into six days, with morning and evening. Let us begin by giving a brief summary of the Mosaic Hexaëmeron.

On the first day, God made light to issue from the midst of the darkness that enshrouded the earth. On the second day He fixed the firmament amidst the waters, separating the inferior from the superior waters; to the firmament He gave the name of the heavens. On the third day He assembled in one place the inferior waters, which He names seas, and caused to appear the dry element, which He names earth; on the same day He commands the earth to bring forth the green grass which bears grain, and trees which give fruits, each according to its species, and which enclose seeds in them-

selves. The fourth day He caused to shine in the heavens the sun, to preside over day, and the moon, to preside over night, and He created the stars. The fifth day He commanded the waters to produce the living animals that swim and the birds that fly on the earth under the firmament of heaven. The sixth day He commanded the earth to bring forth living animals, each according to its species, domestic animals, terrestrial reptiles and the beasts of the earth. Finally, on the same day, He created man to His own image and likeness, and on the seventh day, He rested (that is, ceased to create).

Should the cessation of the creative act or the rest of the seventh day be understood as to the universality of beings or only as to those of our earth? In the first place, as to our earth, this rest is not absolute, as every day, even now, God creates a great number of *souls* to unite them to the body. Moreover, there is no reason why other worlds might not be issuing from nothingness at His creative word. Besides, we must not forget that it is for our moral and religious instruction that Moses wrote, not to satisfy our curiosity respecting points foreign to that purpose. (John 5, 17.)

If we confined ourselves to the simple reading of the beginning of Genesis, we might be inclined to believe that Moses had clearly indicated the chronological *order* in the formation of the globe and of what it contains. In that case it would be right to inquire if the data of science are on this point in conformity with the statement of the sacred writer. But in reality we are not called upon to concern ourselves about this question. For, in order that a conflict between the Bible and human sciences be possible and reasonable, it is necessary above all, as we have said before, that the true meaning of Scripture be absolutely certain. This is far from being the case. There exists, on the contrary, extreme divergence among the Fathers and theologians of the Church as to the *manner of interpreting* the account of Moses. Whilst a great number of them admit a *successive order of creation,* the school of Alexandria, and, in particular, Clement and Origen, believe that the historian nowise intended to set down in a precise manner a succession of days or periods. They believe,

on the contrary, that God created all things at the same time; only the inspired writers of Holy Scriptures, to accommodate themselves to human intelligence, have distinguished and separately set forth the various works performed in reality in an indivisible moment. They do not, therefore, see in the Mosaic account a chronologico-historical statement, but simply a *logical interpretation* of creative action. St. Augustine also admits that everything was created at the same time. In his view, the days of creation are only the different logical moments of the *knowledge* which the *angels* had of the divine works. St. Thomas Aquinas at the outset lays down the principle that when a text is open to be understood in two ways, both in conformity with Catholic doctrine, we should not arbitrarily exclude one of them and claim that the other is the sole sense meant by the Holy Spirit. Applying this principle to the question, he carefully distinguishes the creation itself from the order of the works of creation. If, with all the Fathers, he declares that the *creation* is a dogma of faith, he puts the question of the *order of creation* in the class of free and debatable questions. The opinion, which maintains the *chronological* order, seems to him to be the more simple, and, at first sight, more in conformity with the letter of the text; but, nevertheless, he considers St. Augustine's explanation *more reasonable, more ingenious and more efficacious in refuting the scoffing sophisms of the infidels:* and he adds that he prefers it to the first. (Lib. Sent. d. XIII, q. 1, a. 2 et 3; Summ. theol., I, q. 74, a. 2.)

Thus we see these high authorities allow us great liberty of interpretation with respect to the six days; there is nothing to compel us to find a complete harmony between the inspired text and scientific discoveries, frequently subject to revision and change; hence the different interpretations which have been offered remain the object of free discussion in the theological schools. We know that the Church leaves great latitude to its children in all matters where Catholic dogma is not directly concerned.

Does this mean that the upholders of the chronologico-historic interpretations are wrong, when they endeavor to

establish a *positive* concordance between the Biblical account and the results ascertained by science? Not in the least. They have a right to maintain that opinion, which numbers many illustrious patrons, though such a system, we must admit, does not meet with much favor in our day, encounters greater difficulties than other views, and is more exposed to the attacks of the enemies of revelation. According to them, the account of creation is in perfect harmony with the discoveries of contemporary science. But to establish this admirable concordance it becomes necessary on the one hand to see in the Bible only that which is to be found in it, without giving a preconceived meaning to its words; and on the other hand, to accept from science only that which is really found therein.

This is how a learned contemporary writer, Pfaff, in his "Histoire de la Création" expresses himself respecting the concordance between the Bible and geological facts: "If we compare the data of science with the Biblical history of creation, we see the latter agrees with these data as much as we have the right to expect. We discover the same periods, equally distinct in themselves, making allowance for the historical variations, which they may have undergone; the chronological succession of their appearing, as ascertained by geological discoveries, agrees with that given by Moses. The primitive chaos, the earth at first covered by the waters, then issuing forth; the formation of the inorganic kingdom, followed by the vegetable, and then by the animal kingdom, which has for its first representatives animals living in water, and after them terrestrial animals; and then man, who appears the last of all; and behold here distinctly stated the true succession of beings, corresponding exactly to the various periods of the history of creation, periods which are called days."

We may here refer to the now commonplace difficulty thus expressed: "The geological account of the age of our globe is diametrically opposed to that of Genesis. In fact Moses distinctly states that the earth was made and all its beings organized in six days, whereas science postulates long ages,

even millions of years as a rational explanation of fossiliferous strata and other phenomena of the earth."

ANSWER. As to the claims of geologists for indefinite periods of time it is important to notice that there is no agreement among scientists concerning the number of years they demand, so that geological calculations are found contrary to those of physicists. Hence we might reply to the difficulty by saying that, when the scientists will come to some sort of agreement among themselves, it will be time enough for the defender of the Bible to answer them. At all events their objection is not real but apparent; for, as a matter of fact, there is no conflict between geology and the Scripture. The reason is that the Hebrew word *yôm*—day, besides signifying the ordinary day of twenty-four hours, is also employed to indicate indefinite periods of time. The very space which geologists require.

Learned biblical scholars, after a careful study of the Hebrew word and consulting a great many passages in which it occurs, have discovered that its true meaning is often simply an indefinite period. Therefore the correct rendering of the passage in Exodus 20, 11: "*In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea and all things,*" is equivalent to the expression "in six ages, or six periods, the Lord made heaven and earth," etc. Hence this objection raises no antagonism between geology and the Bible.

In this connection we should observe that whilst, on the one hand, we prefer the plan of adapting the periods of geology to the days of Moses, as a legitimate hypothesis, not contrary to any official pronouncement of the Church, and quite suitable to the defense of the sacred record against the attacks of rationalists, on the other hand we respect the views of those who favor other interpretations likewise tolerated by the Church. As to the relative merits of the different but conservative biblical schools, we deem it advisable to suspend our judgment and await the progress of events. It may be that future discoveries shall bring to light new points of harmony between the days of Genesis and the periods of geology. (See Gerald Molloy, D.D., "Geology and Revelation," l, li.)

161. Remark as to the Age of the World.—We understand by *age of the world* not the time elapsed since the appearance of man upon the earth, but the time comprised between the moment when God began to bring forth beings from out of nothingness until the present moment. As the Scriptures say nothing upon the subject, learned men can discuss it with full liberty. This is what M. de Lapparent, member of the Academy of Sciences, says upon the subject: "Nothing appears harder to ascertain with some degree of precision than the length of geological eras. . . . We may attempt an indirect estimate of the length of those periods by taking into account the thickness of the sediment as a *basis* on which to calculate the probable relative duration of the epoch required to produce them, endeavoring by a theoretic consideration to form *a priori* an idea or conjecture of the time elapsed since the hardening of the crust of the earth. But when we apply this method, we find the data, on which we are obliged to rely, so vague that according to the point of view we adopt, the figures obtained may vary from one to twenty, even from one to one hundred; and yet those extreme figures can inspire no great confidence either way. We must therefore accept only with the greatest reserve the various results in figures, which authors claim to have reached. What we know is that the much varied succession of sedimentary layers and the unceasing transformation of their fauna and flora must have required considerable time. It is not, indeed, going too far to estimate it at millions of years. But when this result is once admitted, the number of millions becomes a matter of indifference, owing to the uncertainty of the data which go to establish it." (Géologie, 2d edit., p. 1590.)

II. The Mosaic Deluge

162. The following is an abridgment of the account given by Moses. In the year 600 of the life of Noah, the seventeenth day of the second month, all the sources of the great abyss of waters were broken and the cataracts of heaven were opened and rain fell upon the earth, without intermission, for forty

days and forty nights. And the waters rose above the earth, and all the high mountains under the heavens were covered, and the water rose fifteen cubits above the mountains which it covered. It was thus that God destroyed every creature that was on earth, from man to the beast, and the reptiles as well as the birds of the air. There remained none but Noah and those who were with him in the ark. And the waters covered the earth during one hundred and fifty days. (Genesis, 7.)

We will say at once that geology attests the existence of many inundations of immense extent, but as to the Mosaic deluge, science, in its present condition, offers no satisfactory proof either way, for or against the actual occurrence of that great catastrophe. This is not surprising: these inundations, having been only a passing event of brief duration, left the surface of the earth almost undisturbed. In fact, the vegetable kingdom was not destroyed, the olive tree could reappear in all its freshness as soon as the waters had retired, and the animals on leaving the ark found at once their ordinary food abundantly supplied by the earth.

But if geology is silent, history speaks loud enough. The fact of the occurrence of this deluge is so undeniable that to question it would be equivalent to rejecting all historical certitude. Let us prove our assertion.

1. *This account, which Moses gives* of that great catastrophe, in which perished the whole human race, with the exception of Noah and his family, is clear, precise and methodical. The details which he gives are accurately stated and accompanied by all circumstantial evidences in such a manner as to form a kind of journal or historical document in the true sense of the word. All agree to admit this, and we have shown that Moses, independently of his inspired character as a writer, a consideration from which we make abstraction in this part of our work, is a profoundly well-informed and eminently respectable author: so that nothing in his writings would lead us to the suspicion of carelessness or fraud on his part.

2. His account of the deluge has moreover been admitted as reliable and genuine by the Hebrews, his fellow-countrymen; they would not have failed to protest, if this prodigious

event had not been recognized as undeniable. Among later Biblical writers, a great many have been the faithful echoes of the statement of Moses; and Jesus Christ Himself and the Apostles have confirmed his testimony in formal terms. Secular historians, those of the Jewish nation, Josephus and Philo, as well as writers of other nations in their eulogies of the author of the Pentateuch are not less explicit.

3. We find the same unanimity in the traditions and chronicles of all *the peoples of the white race;* they all speak of a mass of water overwhelming everything, of a few persons escaping in a ship, of a mountain where the ship rested, of a bird sent out at the close of the catastrophe, and even of a rainbow. "Not only the Aryans and the Semites," says Renan, "but almost all the peoples of the earth, place at the beginning of their annals a struggle against the liquid element, represented by a general cataclysm." And, strange to say, almost all these traditions place the event at about the same time.

4. The fact of the deluge is so well established that men like Bailly and Boulanger, downright unbelievers, who lived in the last century, have been forced to yield to the overwhelming testimony of truth. This is what Boulanger says: "Let us, for instance, take out of the tradition of men one fact, the truth of which is universally acknowledged. What is this fact? I see no other more generally attested than that which has transmitted to us the memory of the famous physical revolution which, it is said, at one time changed the face of the globe, and even brought about the renewal of human society. In a word, the deluge seems to me to be the true *starting point* of the history of nations. Not only the tradition, which has transmitted this fact to us, is the most ancient of all, but it is also clear and intelligible, it presents to us a fact that can be established and confirmed by the universal consent of mankind, because this tradition is found in all languages and in all countries of the world."

The fact of the Mosaic deluge is therefore undeniable. Hence all the objections urged against this tradition have no real value whatever. Moreover, we must not lose sight of the

fact of its being an event miraculous in its cause, in its announcement and in its agent; it is God who used the deluge to chastise guilty humanity; it is He who pronounces a hundred years in advance His prophetic threats; it is He who at the same time opens the abysses of the earth and the floodgates of heaven. Now, nothing is impossible to divine omnipotence. Hence, even though science should be without an answer to the questions arising from the *manner* in which this great cataclysm occurred, nothing can be concluded against the *reality* of the catastrophe itself.

163. Extent of the Deluge.—Let us at the very outset make a remark that destroys the foundation of the objections raised against this cataclysm by Carl Vogt and others. We are in no wise obliged to believe that the whole earth was submerged by the waters of the deluge. It is indeed true that, to indicate the extent of the disaster, Moses on one occasion uses the expression "all the earth," and, on another occasion, the equivalent expression, "under the heavens," *universa terra, sub universo cælo,* but this phrase does not necessarily imply *absolute* universality; for in many passages of the Sacred Books these expressions evidently apply only to a part of the earth. (See Genesis, 41, 54.) Hence, many theologians, following in this an opinion already put forth at the close of the seventeenth century by the learned Isaac Vossius, interpret the words of Moses in the sense that the deluge only covered the portion of the earth *inhabited at that time,* destroying the human race, with the exception of the eight persons contained in the ark. It is well known from other sources that mankind did not at that time occupy all the countries of the habitable globe. Adapting the language current in his day, and desirous of being understood by the people that he was addressing, Moses naturally meant by the expression "under heaven" the celestial space which covered the country inhabited by Noah and his contemporaries, that is, a part of Asia. This explanation of the sacred text, which has been largely adopted by exegetists, is not at all condemned by the Church; and it has never been defined as a dogma of faith that the waters of the

deluge had also covered the then non-inhabited parts of the earth.

"The discussions on the history of the deluge," says Pfaff, "now fail to arouse any interest for the naturalist, for the reason that theologians themselves admit that the account of the Bible can be understood as signifying not that all the mountains on the surface of the globe were then simultaneously inundated, but that only all mankind was destroyed by a vast body of water. That, however, is to admit that the deluge was a partial, and not a total submersion of the globe. The scientist has nothing to object to the fact of the deluge explained in this way; it is impossible for him to prove that a partial deluge, whose existence is affirmed by the traditions of almost all peoples, could not have taken or did not really take place."

We must also mention another opinion which has also found both upholders and opponents. According to this opinion, the deluge did not extend to the whole of mankind. This is what Father Vigouroux, the distinguished biblical scholar, says on this point: "We reject this interpretation because it is contrary to the general tradition of the Church, and no valid argument has been alleged to prove that this tradition had wrongfully interpreted the sacred text." The learned Cardinal Gonzales, of the Order of St. Dominic, expresses himself in these terms: "If we consider the problem of the universality of the deluge in its relations with the biblical texts and ecclesiastical traditions, the opinion that it destroyed all human beings, excepting, of course, the eight persons saved in the ark, seems to be by far the most probable; if we consider the same problem in its relation to science, the theory of its non-universality is not wanting in a certain degree of probability; for the present it is impossible to state which of the two is, absolutely speaking, the more probable." —Gonzales, "La Bible et la Science" (The Bible and Science); V. Motais, "Le Déluge Biblique" (The Biblical Deluge), Paris, 1885.

The historic reality of the Deluge is evident from the detailed Mosaic narrative. The student who believes in the

divine inspiration of the Bible can quote several passages from both the Old and the New Testament, and particularly the very words of infallible wisdom, Jesus Christ, (Matt. 24, 37–39), and those of His first Vicar, St. Peter. (1, c. 3, 19–20.) Such a tremendous cataclysm could not have been ignored by the nations of antiquity: hence we are not surprised at the numerous traditional records of India, Egypt, Assyria, Greece and Chaldea. The Chaldean traditions approach nearest to the Mosaic account. They are impressed in brick tablets reproduced from the originals and preserved in the London British Museum, seen by the present editor in 1889.

Up to the seventeenth century biblical scholars and commentators, generally adhering to the literal interpretation of Genesis 6 and 7, held that the deluge was *geographically* universal, and therefore destructive of all human life outside the ark. Since that time, however, both theological and scientific investigations have thrown great light on the question. In consequence of their later studies the geographical universality of the Deluge may be safely abandoned. Neither the sacred Scripture nor universal ecclesiastical tradition render it advisable to adhere to the opinion that the flood covered the whole surface of the earth. Father Mabillon, the distinguished Benedictine historian and biblical scholar, writes: "The opinion regarding the non-universality of the Deluge is against neither faith nor morals and may therefore be maintained." No authoritative decision on this matter has been pronounced by the Holy See. Eminent geologists both of Europe and America, such as Lyell, Hugh Miller, Edward Hitchcock, Poole and Stillingfleet, argued that the flood was universal only in so far as man was concerned, and showed that this interpretation was in accordance with both Scripture and the teaching of science. The question has been also raised whether the fact that the deluge was not geographically universal, as many recent Biblical scholars hold, implies that it was also non-universal *anthropologically,* namely, as to human life. Conservative writers and theologians generally answer that the reasons advanced by modern scientists for limiting the de-

struction of the flood to only a certain part of the human race, a corner of the Asiatic continent, are far from convincing, and that science can oppose no difficulties insuperable to the omnipotent power of God. Hence it is wiser to contend that the deluge was anthropologically universal, an awful punishment provoked by mankind's sins of the flesh. (Gen. 6, 11-12.)

164. We will now add a few explanations given by learned men concerning the Mosaic deluge.

1. The ark offers nothing as to its *construction* which can greatly surprise us. Noah was rich enough to hire a sufficient number of intelligent, able and skillful workmen, and he had a hundred years to complete his work; why could he not execute the order of God at a time when science and art were considerably advanced and men were building large cities; when they were erecting the monuments of Balbeck, the ancient Heliopolis of Syria, whose stupendous ruins, still standing, cause unbounded astonishment to the scientific men of our day? We speak here of the older part of these ruins, for there are other monuments whose beginning does not go beyond the age of the Antonines (A.D. 180). Burckhard, who measured some of the blocks of cut granite used in building the city of Balbeck, found some measuring 55.50 metres long by 3.65 metres in width and thickness.

We can conclude that Noah's ark was not more difficult to build than the stones of Balbeck were to lift. With such evidence of power and intelligence exhibited in those remote times, the building of the ark must have been, after all, a comparatively easy task.

2. As to the *capacity* of the ark, it has been proved by calculations again and again, repeated by Le Pelletier, the learned Abbé Maupied, by the skillful architect Silberschlag, of Berlin, and by the French vice-admiral Thevenard that the ark could have contained many more species of animals, mammals, birds and reptiles than are known to exist in our days, with all the provisions necessary for their maintenance. Tiele has calculated that the capacity of the ark was 3,600,000 cubic feet, and reserving nine-tenths for provisions, it left

room enough to lodge 7,000 species of animals at the rate of two for each species. This is evidently more space than was required, considering that in the supposition of a partial deluge, Noah had to take into the ark only a relatively small number of species of animals, those mainly within his reach.

Competent men have also remarked that the *proportions of the ark* were the best possible, so much so that its peculiar structure may be regarded as a veritable masterpiece.

3. To explain how the descendants of Noah have had time to form the various races of mankind, hereinafter spoken of and whose existence is ascertained by the oldest records that chronological science possesses, and also to explain how human speech could have become so diversified as it is in our day, it is enough to observe that the precise *date* of the deluge is not known to us. In speaking of the antiquity of nations, we shall prove that as to the earliest primitive ages of mankind, there is, properly speaking, no Biblical chronology, and that we do not know at what period man, followed by his descendants, appeared upon the earth, nor when the Mosaic deluge took place. It may be very properly urged that this terrible chastisement was inflicted by God on the human race at a time much more remote than is generally supposed, and in this way its date may be put back as far as may be required by historical and archeological sciences. See Vigouroux, "Les Livres saints et la critique rationaliste" (The Sacred Books and Rationalistic Criticism), vol. 3, ch. 7.

§ II. The Bible and Astronomy

165. Some objections have been brought forward in the name of astronomy, which refer particularly to the works of the first and fourth days. After what we have said above concerning the liberty and latitude allowed in the interpretation of the Hexaëmeron (six days' work), we might dispense with answering these objections. It is well, however, to show that even in the hypothesis which admits a chronological order in the work of the six days, these objections have no value.

First Objection. Why is it that celestial bodies, incom-

parably greater than the earth, are represented as something simply subservient to the latter, and as luminaries placed at its service?

Answer. Here it is sufficient to bear in mind the fact that Moses was not writing a treatise of astronomy, and that therefore it was not his intention to describe things according to the views and terminology of modern mechanics. Writing for the purpose of instructing men, the habitants of the earth, on their religious duties, he speaks of the heavens according to what is apparent to the senses and according to the relative influence exercised by the heavenly bodies upon our planet. Is it not true that all writers, with the exception of those whose mission it is specially to teach science, employ the same language? It matters little whether Moses did or did not receive from God precise ideas about the sun and other celestial globes; what is certain is that, considering his object, he was not required to speak of them otherwise than as he did.

2. Besides, our planet, whilst playing but an insignificant part in the immensity of the astronomical system of the universe, has, nevertheless, a much more important office to fill in the spiritual order in the carrying out of the divine plan of redemption by the actual application of its untold benefits to mankind through the ministry of God's Church. If it pleased God to choose the earth, notwithstanding its relative smallness, to place man thereon, and especially to make it the theater of His supernatural revelation and of the Incarnation of the Divine Word, why should Moses not have spoken of the earth in a special manner? Jerusalem was indeed very small compared with the celebrated cities of antiquity, and yet the Scriptures do not mention the latter, or, if they refer to them at all, it is simply on account of their connexion with the history of Jerusalem and of the Jewish people. Who can reasonably object to this course of action so completely justified?

To the objection: "Seen from the sun, the earth dwindles away to a mere speck, a mere dust mote glittering in his beams. How is it possible that God assumed human nature on this insignificant little globe?" We answer, with Dr. Lorimer (Astronomy, p. 288): "The incomparably sublime and ador-

able idea which was realized and expressed by the Incarnation of the Son of God is that of an infinite self-humiliation of the Divine Majesty, to compensate and atone by this act of infinite self-abasement for the pride exhibited by the rebellion of the puny creature against the infinite dignity of the Creator. Therefore, the main object of the Mystery of the Incarnation, as of the work of Redemption in general, is based on humility. Hence, in accordance with this providential plan, the cradle of the Redeemer was a manger, the house of his birth a stable, the city of his nativity the little Bethlehem, the least among the cities of Judah. And therefore, we may add, the planet, upon which this mystery of humility was to be accomplished, was the earth, His little Bethlehem among the vast sidereal worlds, this manger of the Universe."

The size of the earth as compared with the rest of the Universe is insignificant, it is true, but reason is not wont to measure the significance and importance of things by their size; else a whale should be deemed of more worth than the brain of a Shakespeare, a ton of coal more valuable than the Koh-i-noor diamond. Mr. Mallock finds it difficult to admit that "the Creator of all the world died for the sake of a swarm of ephemeral animals crawling for a moment on the surface of this paltry pillule, our earth."

To this we reply. The phrase is a sensational one, hardly worthy of Mr. Mallock, and, what is worse, it implies a manifest error. We are not ephemeral animals, but rational beings endowed by the Creator with a spiritual, intellectual, immortal soul. Even the animal part of us will rise again and endure for ever in endless bliss, for we are the conscious children of God, and, if found worthy, the heirs of His kingdom.

166. Remarks. Neither *the Holy Scriptures nor the Catholic Church* has ever taught that the earth is at the central point of the material world or that it remains absolutely immovable in space, with the suns and stars circulating around it every twenty-four hours as around their centre of movement. As the belief in the immobility of the earth was that of the Greek and Roman world, it is quite natural that it should have been accepted and repeated by a large number of

the Fathers of the Church. In this, as in many other things, which were not within their immediate competence, they followed the ideas then universally received, but their error on this point has nothing to do with the dogmas of faith. So Christian belief did not prevent, a century before Galileo, the immortal Copernicus, a distinguished priest and a sincere believer, from subverting this erroneous system. And, at any rate, the Scriptures are by no means committed to the erroneous geocentric system of the world. The Bible simply states that the sun, the moon and the stars serve to light and vivify the earth. Who can deny the truth of this fact, as clear as day itself?

2. It may seem strange that God should have chosen our earth, compared to other globes so small, to make it the habitation of man and the scene of the Incarnation. There is much to be said on this point. We shall merely repeat a few beautiful remarks of the Rev. Father Olivier, S.J.: "The stable of Bethlehem was a very humble and very obscure place for the birth of the Redeemer of the world; why did not Almighty God choose in preference some magnificent palace in some celebrated city? Let us not attempt to fathom the secret purposes of God; unless he deigns to reveal them to us, we should be fruitlessly expending our labor. (Prov. 25, 27; Eccl. 3, 22.) From man we may demand the reason of his conduct: as to God, we can only ask what was His good pleasure. His Will is the only reason for His acts; it is always just and holy, being identified with His Infinite Wisdom. After all, immensity itself is but an atom in His sight, and if He chose that grain of sand which we call the earth to place upon it the monarch of creation, it is because He made this earth fit for his habitation. And even if in the creation of the many stars in space God had in view only to afford to the intellect of man an inexhaustible subject of study and to his heart a reason for gratitude and love, who would venture to declare such a purpose unworthy of Him, whose power has no limit and whose magnificence equals His power?" (See n. 165.)

3. It seems to us expedient to add a word here about the

hypothesis of the *plurality of inhabited worlds.* This hypothesis has been maintained with much ability by writers eminently Catholic, among others by Father Secchi, S. J., their opinion, however, does not seem to us one offering any proof capable of producing *conviction.* However, if it does not seem repugnant to our ideas to think that these innumerable stars contain intelligent creatures capable of knowing and loving God, and if these creatures really exist, we admit without any difficulty, either that they may not have been in any need of a Redeemer, or that God displayed His mercy to them in a manner unknown to us; or, finally, that they may have participated in the effects of the Most Precious Blood shed on Calvary: *"And through Him* (Christ) . . . *making peace through the blood of His cross, both as to the things that are on earth and the things that are in heaven."* (Col. 1, 20.) But, in truth, we do not see why man could not be at least the secondary final cause of all visible creation. Why, for instance, could not we suppose that God, to whom nothing is difficult or impossible, might have created these stars of such immensity and in such prodigious numbers for the purpose of giving us a more exalted idea of His omnipotence, and thus more easily detaching our hearts from the petty things of earth? *"To re-establish all things in Christ which are in heaven and on earth."* (Eph. 1, 10.)

"Did not God," says Father Olivier, "so love man as to give His only Son for him? What are all the worlds in comparison with this divine gift? Has He not made man almost divine in associating his poor human nature with the divine nature, in the person of the Incarnate Word? *Divinæ consortes naturæ,* partakers of the divine nature. (II Peter, 1, 4.) And is not man, thus transfigured, much greater than the stars which roll in space? One single drop of the Blood of Jesus is worth more than all the heavenly globes; the sacrifice of the Cross and the sacrifice of our Altars which renew and perpetuate the divine immolation of Golgotha are greater than all the magnificences of the Universe." (See De Concilio, "Harmony between Science and Revelation," xxxiv: The Plurality of worlds in harmony with divine Revelation.)

167. Second Objection. We cannot admit (*a*) the existence of light, nor (*b*) the possibility of vegetation at a time when the sun did not as yet exist.

Answer. As to the existence of light previous to the appearance of the sun, we say, in the first place, if that objection had any real value, we should have to admit that it is impossible for us to furnish ourselves with light at night time, or wherever the sun cannot reach us. Even the most ignorant man sees every day that there exist other *sources* of light besides the sun. The simple light of the candle, which Voltaire perhaps used in writing this ridiculous objection, should have shown to him its utter worthlessness. Who does not know that the mere raising of a body to a high temperature, a blow, an intense and rapid chemical combination, suffice to render luminous bodies that were previously dark? Does not the passage of the electric current cause a blinding light to spring from intense darkness? Who would venture to say that at the beginning of the world the combination of its cosmic elements did not possess enough of power to produce a vivid light?

Secondly, as it has already been stated, we are not bound to admit a strictly chronological succession in the operations of the six days. Hence the creation of light is not revealed as anterior to that of the sun. On the other hand, even in the system of cosmogony that explains the duration of the days as equivalent to long indefinite ages or periods of time, the objection of our adversaries is easily solved if we simply remark that only on the fourth day the sun, penetrating through the thick vapors that enveloped the earth, did appear in its present brilliancy and form. Lastly, is it at all impossible that other luminous globes should have shone in the heavens before our sun?

(*b*) As to vegetation, before the appearance of the sun, its existence is perfectly well established by geology. Let us hear what Hugh Miller tells us on this subject. Speaking of the coal period before the influence of the sun in its present state, he says: "At no other time was there seen such a magnificent flora. There were, for instance, more than 2,500

species of ferns (to-day not more than sixty can be found in Europe), and they were of gigantic height.'' Such is the fact; it is not for us to supply the explanation. We might further remark with M. de Lapparent that the nature of the plants of the coal period required but little light, a subdued light and at the same time tropical heat. No one is ignorant of the fact that the same gigantic vegetation is found at the poles that is seen at the equator. ''This paleothermal phenomenon can be explained,'' says this author, ''only by supposing a much dilated sun, possibly still in a nebular state, and consequently giving but little light, especially through the thick layers of clouds that surrounded the earth. The sun was not, at that time, reduced to its present diameter, causing the variations of months and seasons.'' (Géologie, 2d edit., pp. 1586-1595.)

Remarks. This is not the time for us to examine the question of Galileo, the celebrated seventeenth-century astronomer; we shall treat of it fully in Part VIII, chap. V of this course. We shall then see that there never has been concerning Galileo's astronomical system any doctrinal decision of the Church, or of the Pope speaking *ex-cathedra*, and that consequently the question of infallibility is in no way involved in this matter.

§ III. The Bible and Biology

168. We have just seen that faith has nothing to dread from geology, or the science of the earth, nor from astronomy, or the science of the heavens. It is in a no less secure position when confronted by biology, or the science of life.

According to Scripture, God in His omnipotence created plants and animals in their various species, and gave them the power of reproducing themselves. It is to this creative act that the Scripture attributes the existence of life, which some impious naturalists have attempted to disprove by substituting for creation their unproved theories of spontaneous generation. ''If we reject the hypothesis of spontaneous generation,'' says Haeckel, ''we are compelled to have recourse to the

miracle of supernatural creation." According to this view, or rather assumption, of infidel scientists, spontaneous generation consisted in the formation of plants and animals *without pre-existing germs,* and by the sole action of *chemical and physical forces* inherent to matter, exactly as we see "sugar and vitriol" formed by these forces. Hence they argue, if the thing can be done now, it could have been done before at any time; the hypothesis, then, of the creation of living organisms is at least superfluous. Such is the explanation made by heterogenist materialists; we have mentioned it simply as a record of an additional mental aberration, without, however, attaching any importance to it.

Answer. Not only has the fact of spontaneous generation never been proven, but this hypothesis can no longer be maintained; it is condemned without appeal by learned men. "Since the time of Redi (1695)," writes Flourens, "no one believes any longer in the spontaneous generation of insects; the spontaneous generation of intestinal worms finds no defenders since the time of Balbiani, who triumphantly disproved it, and after the experiments of Pasteur, it has been generally abandoned as to all kinds of animalcules."

"We consider the doctrine of spontaneous generation as definitely abandoned," says de Quatrefages. "We do not know of one single positive fact," said Virchow (1902), "which might be alleged to prove that spontaneous generation ever took place, that an inorganic mass ever spontaneously transformed itself into one endowed with organism." Littré, and Darwin himself, in spite of all their evolutionary theories, also reject it. The question has been finally settled by Pasteur, the illustrious author of the microbe theory and one of the glories of the Academy of Sciences of Paris. These are his precise words at the conclusion of a lecture given at the Sorbonne in the presence of a number of the greatest scientific men of the day. "There is not one solitary instance known to our day in which beings have been observed to have come into the world without parents. Those who assert such a thing have been the sport of illusions or of causes which they have not been able to perceive or which they were unwilling to

avoid." (See *Etudes Rel.*, April, 1889.) The air, even the purest in appearance, holds in suspension an infinite number of germs of plants and animalcules, which pass easily through filters and corks. It is these germs which, coming into a favorable medium, develop and occasion the fermentation and decomposition of various substances. By taking most minute precaution to prevent the access of these germs, Pasteur discovered that life never spontaneously appears in organic matter; that liquids, even those most easily altered, may be preserved indefinitely, provided they are kept free from ferment, of which the air is the vehicle. It is a well-known fact that these discoveries of Pasteur have enabled surgery to effect in a few years marvelous progress in the anti-septic dressing of wounds and to venture upon operations hitherto considered hopeless or impossible. See "Wainwright's Scientific Sophisms," an excellent work on the subject at issue.

As Father Schouppe writes in his excellent manual of Religious Instruction: "According to the materialists, man is not created to the image and likeness of God, but he springs from a spontaneous vegetable growth, which little by little became an animal, and by degrees increased in perfection till it developed into man. It will suffice to reply to this mean and revolting hypothesis, that it has been refuted and proved to be impossible by learned men of the first rank, such as Quatrefages.

"As to the opinion regarding *heterogeneity,* or *spontaneous generation,* it is now generally rejected by science. In order to defend it, the ancients founded their theory on the multitude of little animals which appear on substances in a state of putrefaction, and they thought that these creatures were formed at the expense of the elements of such substances. They laid down this principle in consequence: *Corruptio unius, generatio alterius,* every creature in dissolution produces another. But the more profound researches of modern times have shown that the production of animals, which is manifested under these circumstances, is due solely to one of the generating processes known to science, and that these animals issue perpetually from germs deposited by creatures of

the same kind. Modern science thus opposes this other axiom to the false principle of the ancients: *Omne vivum ex ovo*—Everything that lives comes from a living germ.

The doctrine of spontaneous generation, however, has still some adherents. Unluckily for them, all the experiments they have tried in order to support this superannuated hypothesis have declared against them. The only specious argument, which they can urge in its favor, is the appearance of living creatures, *sui generis,* in the parenchyma of the organs of divers animals. But it is more than probable that the germs of these creatures have been brought there by means of circulation, as the fine membranes of the capillary vessels would not constitute an insurmountable obstacle to these germs, whilst they are of microscopic diminutiveness. The absence of a direct proof of this mode of introduction, due only to our want of the necessary means of observation, cannot be a valid argument in favor of a theory which is in opposition to a universal physiological law. This law has been accepted by most of the scientific men of our period; but judging, at the same time, that direct proofs are to be found, they have sought them by means of ingenious observations, which have produced results that may be called decisive.

A partisan of the ancient ideas—M. Pouchet, Director of the Museum at Rouen, in France—took certain alterable liquids, such as milk, etc., and placed them in carefully-closed receivers, in which he had either created a vacuum or introduced pure oxygen; or else he had submitted the contents to a temperature of 100 degrees, in order to destroy all living germs which might exist therein. After some days he found the liquids full of germs, which, to his mind, was a proof of spontaneous generation. Another *savant*—M. Pasteur—opposed M. Pouchet, and declared that his experiments had been made under defective conditions, and that he himself tried the same experiments, taking, however, stricter precautions, and the alterable substances remained indefinitely without producing any organized atoms; an evident proof that life proceeds only from a living germ. The experiments of M. Pasteur appeared so conclusive that, when brought before a commis-

sion appointed by the Academy of Sciences, they obtained full sanction from that learned body, who pronounced against the hypothesis of heterogeneity.

It is after the memorable labors of this learned man, labors confirmed by the experiments of Schultze, Schwann, Milne-Edwards, and the observations of Payen, Quatrefages, Claude Bernard and Dumas, that the Academy of Sciences *laid down this fundamental law of biology:* "Organized beings, in the present state of our globe, always receive life from living bodies; and neither great nor small beings are born without having had their respective ancestors."

169. Remarks. Even if verified, the hypothesis of spontaneous generation would not have obtained the object sought for by *a certain number* of its partisans, which was to do away with the very idea of creation and thereby with God Himself. Even if we did see life spring from the bosom of matter, there would still remain entirely unexplained the problem how the *first appearance* of inanimate matter is to be accounted for, a marvelous being endowed with the property of producing life, of giving what it has not; and producing an effect superior to its cause. Whether we will it or not, we are always and finally brought back to the first creative act, namely, to the intervention of divine omnipotence (n. 60). At some time matter may not have existed; it has not in itself the power to produce itself; it therefore owes its existence to some anterior being having in itself its sufficient cause.

2. It is, moreover, *scientifically* demonstrated that *life has not always existed upon the earth;* it is equally certain that up to this day there never has been found a living being, which did not come from another being endowed with life. This fact, whose existence is perfectly and fully established, singularly embarrasses and vexes the materialists. To maintain their absurd system of the eternity of matter, they see themselves compelled not only to reject a metaphysical proof altogether irrefutable in the opinion of all serious men, but they are reduced to deny the conclusions of science itself, that is to say, the things attested by observation and experience. This is a bitter necessity for men who affect to swear by noth-

ing but science, which should not rely upon anything but undeniable facts.

3. Here we have a remarkably strange occurrence: the greater the progress of science the nearer it approaches the truth of Christian dogmas. Thus Virchow himself, who in the past saw in virtue and vice only chemical products like sugar and vitriol, and to whom thought was but a secretion of the brain, led later by serious reflection into a rational view of human life, did not hesitate to utter these significant words: "To refer the production of life and that of the human mind to simple evolution of the organic world, is to admit a mere hypothesis and to go beyond the conditions of science." He goes still further, saying: "The movement of matter being no longer the supreme cause of the production of beings, there remains the intervention of a superior cause, which we have no right to declare impossible. Then arises before us the question of theism in all its grandeur and power." Haeckel, one of the prominent leaders of materialistic and atheistic science, has not the courage frankly to acknowledge the triumphant truth. He admits, however that if we reject spontaneous generation, we must accept miracles. But, as he will not admit miracles at any price, he obstinately adheres to the baseless theory of spontaneous generation, in spite of all experience to the contrary; he thus prefers to repudiate the principles of science itself rather than to admit the intervention of God. How honest such a proceeding is, no one will find it difficult to determine.

Every scientific man, every learned biologist is constrained by the very science he professes to believe that there was once a period, however remote, when no life of any kind existed or could exist on earth It is perfectly clear that the presence of life was impossible, when, according to the eminent American physicist, C. H. Hitchcock, the whole globe was in a state of igneous fusion, and its temperature much higher than that of molten iron. How then did life commence? Who originated vegetable and animal life? What power first introduced man into this world? Attempts, we know, have been made to ignore the first Cause, the Creator, and explain the

primitive and the successive steps of organic life by evolutionary processes. But all in vain, for the advocates of the Godless theory found themselves completely baffled in their undertaking, as they were confronted with three impassable gulfs. I mean the passage or transition from inorganic, inert matter to vegetable life, from vegetable to sensitive, animal life, and, above all, from animal to intellectual life. Mr. Wallace, the joint author of Darwinism, was frank enough to admit that thrice at least, in the course of development, a power distinct from and superior to that of nature must have intervened to do for her what she could not do for herself in the production first of the organic life of plants, secondly of the sensitive life of animals, finally of the rational life of man.

Certain it is that science has found nothing to explain any of these processes, a fact fully confirmed by the writings of the late Professor Tait. "To say that even the lowest form of life, not to speak of reason or consciousness, can be fully explained on physical principles alone, that is, by the mere motion and interaction of portions of inanimate matter, is simply unscientific. There is absolutely nothing known in physical science which can lend the slightest support to such an idea." Lord Kelvin wrote: "I cannot admit that, with regard to the origin of life, Science neither affirms nor denies. Science *positively affirms* creative Power. It is not in dead matter that we live, and move and have our being, but in the creating and directing Power, which Science compels us to accept as an article of belief. The conclusion is inevitable. There is only one answer that logically and rationally explains the origin of life: and that answer stands inscribed on the pages of a noble volume written under the dictation of the Holy Spirit thousands of years ago: *'God said: let the earth bring forth the green herb and the tree that beareth fruit. And it was so done.'* (Gen. 1, 11.) *'And God said: Let the earth bring forth the living creatures, cattle and beasts. And it was so done.'* (Gen. 1, 24.) *'And the Lord formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul.'* (Gen. 2, 7.)"

If, therefore, men are found, who refuse to recognize God as the only author of life, and fail to acknowledge His power in the marvelous works that surround us, it is not because His intervention is not clearly manifested there, but because they willfully close their eyes, "*loving darkness rather than light,*" as the Evangelist St. John writes. (3, 19.)

4. Let us say a few words as to the future extinction of life upon the earth. Scientific men have not only demonstrated that there was a time when there existed upon our earth no living thing, but they now proclaim that a day will come when *all life will disappear* from off its face. Among the causes which they assign for this event is the cooling of its mass. It is a well-established fact that some of the stars which fill the heavens are gradually losing their light and heat; that our own sun itself has considerably cooled, and there will come a time when it will cease to furnish to the earth its vivifying heat. This future disappearance of life, that is to be caused by extreme cold, is so certain that it forms the conclusion of the highly creditable treatise of geology by M. Lapparent.

Even if the cooling of our globe might not bring about the disappearance of life, there would still be other inevitable causes of extinction. We may mention *erosion*, or the gradual wearing away of continents and islands, which will end by disappearing under the waters of the sea; then the *drying up* of the earth, which will sooner or later absorb the waters of the seas, and the atmosphere itself; lastly, the *combustion*, or *burning up* of the earth, which may occur in many ways, and, in particular, by collision with a heavenly body moving with bewildering speed in a direction directly opposite to that of our planet. The shock of a mass equal or superior impinging on our globe, even if it had no heat, would produce heat enough to reduce the earth to a shapeless mass of flying dust.

In enumerating the various causes of the disappearance of living beings, learned men confine themselves, as they should, to the sphere which is assigned to them; it is solely by the data of science that they foresee what may occur. As Christians we know by revelation that it is by fire that the

last inhabitants of the world are to perish. This is the language of Christian revelation as testified by St. Peter (II Peter 3, 10): *"The day of the Lord shall come as a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with great violence; and the elements shall be dissolved with heat; and the earth and the works that are in it shall be burnt up."*

It is thus clear that as to the question of the end of the world also, there exists no antagonism whatever between the teachings of faith and those of science. Nay, more, science has likewise shown, that constant as may be the sum of the energies of the universe, the quantity of vibratory energy or heat dispersed in starry space increases unceasingly at the expense of the visible energy; from which it follows that the universe tends to reach what we might call the extreme limit or boundary line, a fixed state, comparable to death. "There has been found," says Clausius, "a natural law which justifies us to conclude in a sure manner that in the universe everything has not a circular course, but that modifications take place in a determined direction, and thus tend to bring about a fixed and limited state or condition of being." From this, this learned man also concludes that the Universe has had a commencement, for "If the world was eternal," says he, "it would to-day be dead." (See Gmeiner, "Modern Scientific Views and Christian Doctrines Compared," iv, Geology; Hettinger, "Natural Religion," I, iv, p. 132 *sqq.*)

§ IV. The Bible and Paleontology

I. Order of the Creation of Organized Beings

170. Paleontology is the science which has for its object the knowledge of animals and vegetables which no longer exist, but the remains or vestiges of which are to be found in the depths of the earth's crust. These organized bodies, or their recognizable traces, which are called fossils, are found down to the soil of the quaternary age, the only strata where there can be found undoubted traces of the existence of man.

Paleontological science is not yet fully established as a

science, except on general lines, and its conclusions are open to objection on more than one point. If the layers or strata of our globe were everywhere regularly placed one over the other, as the leaves of a book, it would only be necessary to turn them over, as we do with the printed pages of a volume, to read with confidence the relative age of each fossiliferous formation. But it is far from being thus: the leaves of this book of nature are nowhere placed in regular order; they are dispersed, or mutilated, or mixed up as in a volume where the pages have been confusedly mingled up and disarranged. It is therefore easy to understand why learned men cannot always agree, when they seek to replace in due order the leaves of this book. The discussion becomes still warmer when it comes to determining the time necessary for the formation of the various layers; some scientists demand centuries and centuries; others are satisfied with much shorter periods, and even in some instances have recourse to sudden catastrophes and extraordinary upheavals of the earth's crust. We do not feel ourselves bound to take sides with either one theory or the other in this discussion, and we are under no necessity of seeking in the science of paleontology, in its present imperfect state, for an argument in favor of the Bible; and this particularly because, as has already been said, nothing obliges us to see a strictly chronological order in the Mosaic account of the formation of the earth. We must, however, remark that the results reached by science seem to agree with the order of the succession of species indicated by the sacred historian.

As students of paleontology know, fossils of vegetable and animal life (human remains excluded) deposited during the long periods of geological ages, have been found imbedded in nearly all the rocks of sedimentary origin that form the crust of the earth. Geologists are all agreed in holding that their formation, similar to petrification, required thousands, nay millions of years, a fact in full harmony with the theory, which interprets the Mosaic days as equivalent to indefinite periods of time, and therefore fully accounts for the very remote formation of these fossils.

If, however, the Mosaic days are taken in their literal

sense as meaning the short space of twenty-four hours for each, the advocates of this latter view cannot escape the conclusion that Almighty God, besides giving life to endless creatures, also created, at the same time, an immense multitude of dead beings, practically a huge cemetery, a feat apparently unworthy of Him, who, as we read in St. Matthew (22, 32), said of Himself that He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

On the 30th of June, 1909, the following decision of the Pontifical Biblical Commission was approved by the Supreme Pontiff Pius X: "It is asked whether in the nomination and distinction of the six days, recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, the Hebrew word yôm—day—may be taken either in its proper sense as meaning a natural day, or in its improper sense as equivalent to some period of time: And whether exegetical scholars are at liberty to discuss such question; the answer was affirmative. Fulcranus Vigouroux, S.S. —Laurentius Janssen, O.S.B., Consultores ab Actis."

II. Of the Origin of Man and of Transformism

171. Man, the master-piece of creation, owes his existence to an *immediate and special act of God.* This is the teaching of the Bible: "*God created man in his own image and likeness.*" The doctrine of the Church is not less formal on this point. It is, therefore, not allowable for a Christian to see in man, body and soul, the result of a process of evolution and gradual development from an ape or any other animal brought to perfection. Darwin, Carl Vogt, Haeckel, Huxley, Mortillet and others, and, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, Lamarck, have claimed that man was the result of an endless series of transformations. According to their theory a first organism, to which they gave the name of monad, protoplasm, Bathybios, is supposed to have progressively developed during innumerable centuries, and had ended by producing, one after another, all the species of plants and animals; and then passing through the ape, had finally brought forth man himself as we find him now in his highest degree of perfection.

We must not be surprised that the antagonists of the supernatural should make their greatest effort to substitute the doctrine of man's origin from animals for the revealed dogma of the creation of Adam and Eve by a special act of God's power, not only as to their soul, but also as to their material organism, the body. And the reason is because this dogmatic truth is intimately bound up with that of our eternal destiny; to overthrow it, would be to overthrow, if it were possible, the whole edifice of Revelation.

The materialists would have us believe that the theory, which includes the entire man, his material body and his spiritual soul, in the series of evolutions, is a scientific truth; we hold, and prove, on the contrary, that it is absolutely false and utterly inadmissible.

It is not our purpose, within the limits of this manual, to treat the question of evolution, as applied to the supposed transformation of species in the vast field of both the vegetable and the animal kingdoms. Our discussion, therefore, will be restricted to the exposition and refutation of that theory as applied to man. Nevertheless, it will not be amiss to quote here from Cardinal Mazzella, "De Deo Creante," p. 351 *sqq.*, the words and arguments of some leading scientific men, which will enable the unbiased reader to endorse the conclusions of the late St. George Mivart in his work entitled "Lessons from Nature," pp. 280 and 300: "The hypothesis of natural selection originally put forward as the origin of species has been really abandoned by Darwin himself, and is untenable, . . . and as made use of by those, who would attribute to it the origin of man, is an irrational conception. . . . I weigh my words and have present to my mind the many distinguished naturalists who have accepted the notion, and yet I cannot hesitate to call it *a puerile hypothesis.*"

Professor Wyville Thomson, F.R.S., (in *Nature,* Nov. 9, 1871, p. 35) says: "So far as practical naturalists are concerned, species are permanent within their narrow limits of variation, and it would introduce an element of infinite confusion and error, if we were to regard them in any other light. . . . During the whole period of recorded human ob-

servation, not one single instance of the change of one species into another has been detected, and, singular to say, in successive geological formations, although new species are constantly appearing, and there is abundant evidence of progressive change, no single case has as yet been observed of one species passing through a series of inappreciable modifications into another."

Dr. Thomas Wright, F.R.S.E., F.G.S. (in *Nature*, August 26, 1875, p. 357) writes: "In these remarks I have carefully avoided any allusion to the origin of species, because geology suggests no theory of natural causes, and paleontology affords no support to the hypothesis which seeks by a system of evolution to derive all the varied forms of organic life from pre-existing organisms of a lower type. As far as I have been able to read the record of the rocks, I confess I have failed to discover any lineal series among the vast assemblage of extinct species, which might form a basis and render biological support to such a theory."

"The many striking discoveries recently made of the ancient monuments, tablets and tombs of Egypt are in direct antagonism to the theory of Evolution, particularly regarding the transmutation of species, and the assumed production from lower to higher forms of organic beings. It is argued, if men, horses, oxen, dogs, cats, birds, etc., have not perceptibly changed for 6000 years, it is impossible to believe that Evolution is other than a chimera. If the old records, accessible to man's inspection to-day furnish direct proofs of immutability of type for such protracted periods, it is up to modern zoologists and physiologists, who have evolutionary views, to establish an opposite state of things by actual demonstration. In the presence of such facts it is indeed too much to ask a reading, reflecting, reasoning public to take the theory of Evolution on trust, and to be satisfied with the gratuitous assertion that 6000 years are of no account in the production of plants and animals. Such unquestioning credulity would not be asked for in any other department of natural science. So long as facts hold the field, it is vain for fiction in any form to obtain a footing. The Evolutionary

fiction is the less to be tolerated when it seeks to obliterate all trace of superior design and the belief in a first cause, the Creator.'' (See J. Bell Pettigrew, M.D., ''Design in Nature,'' III, p. 1333.)

The alumnus perusing these pages, if he has not forgotten his logic, will appreciate the following quotation, and fully realize its value. Charles Elam, M.D., writes in ''The Contemporary Review'' (December, 1896, p. 132): ''The conclusions which necessarily follow from the foregoing observations may be briefly summed up in one syllogism, embracing not only natural selection, but also the larger theme of organic evolution generally:

''The major proposition is given by Tyndall in his 'Fragments of Science,' p. 133. 'Without verification a theoretic conception is a mere figment of the intellect.' The minor is supplied by Thomas Huxley, the distinguished biologist and militant rationalist.

'' 'But the theory of organic evolution is an unverified theoretic conception, for neither observation nor experiment has hitherto furnished direct evidence in favor of that theory.' —''Lay Sermons, p. 226.''

'' 'Therefore organic evolution is a mere figment of the intellect.' ''

''There is nothing more striking,'' says Agassiz (in *Atlantic Monthly,* January, 1874, p. 99), ''in the whole book of nature than the power shown by types and species to resist physical conditions. Endless evidence may be brought from the whole expanse of land, and air, and water, showing that identical physical conditions will do nothing toward the merging of species into one another, neither will variety of conditions do anything toward their multiplication.''

The question is far more grave and complicated when it concerns *man. Because of his spiritual soul,* man is so distinct from all inferior organisms that we cannot conceive any natural transition possible from an animal, even the most perfect, to the nature and personality of man. Besides, the Bible, in setting forth the origin of man, mentions *a special act* of the Creator for the production of his body as well as

for that of his soul. But does the *sacred text* indicate in a *formal way* the manner, according to which the Creator operated in bringing forth from the dust the body of Adam? Did He, as in the case of the soul, act *directly* by a creative act of His omnipotence, or did He leave *secondary causes* to act according to the laws and forces which He Himself established? Science cannot answer this question, hence it can shed no light on the fact itself. We believe that we should understand the Bible in its most natural obvious sense; that is to say, in the sense of *an immediate act.* (See Gen. 2, 7.) It is in this sense that it has been understood by the Fathers and Catholic interpreters, and up to this time the upholders of evolution have not brought forward a single argument which can engender a doubt as to the view held by Christian philosophers in harmony with the teaching of the Catholic Church.

III. Essential Difference Between Man and the Lower Animals

172. The erroneous evolutionary system of the advocates of transformism, which would assign to us apes for ancestors, naturally leads to the conclusion that man does not essentially differ from animals. This is in reality the conclusion arrived at by materialists of our days. Is it not a sad, melancholy sight to see intelligent men expend so much talent in order to prove that they are no better than beasts? Here, indeed, we see the literal verification of the words of Holy Scripture: *"Man, when he was in honor, did not understand; he had been compared to senseless beasts and made like unto them."* (Psalm 48, 21.)

We must hasten to say that these degrading theories are far from being endorsed and supported by the majority of learned men. By far the greater number of them recognize in man characters so exceptionally proper of him as to constitute, so to speak, a separate class of beings, a kingdom apart from all the rest. We think that it will not be profitless, in the times in which we live, to prove the worthlessness and absurdity of the systems opposed to revealed Faith.

Before proceeding we shall take notice of some declarations, or rather admissions, made by rationalists celebrated for their learning. To link together the parentage of man and that of the ape, a number of most ancient human skulls were taken, which, we are told, had belonged to people of an inferior type. This is what is said by Virchow, professor at Berlin and President of the German Anthropological Society: "If we study fossil man of the quaternary period, who should come nearest to our earliest ancestors, we always find man *such as we are to-day*. The old troglodytes, the ancient cave-dwellers, the men of the bogs and of the lacustral villages, are now recognized as quite a respectable class of human beings; . . . All things considered, we are obliged to acknowledge that there has not been found even the slightest fossil type in a condition inferior to that of recent man fully developed. . . . There has not yet been discovered any fossil skull of an ape or of a man-ape which could really have belonged to a human individual." At the Congress of Moscow, held in August, 1892, Virchow again said: "It is in vain that we seek for the link that binds man with the ape, or to any other kind of animal. . . . There is no proanthropes, there exists no man-ape. . . . All men of simian appearance are only pathological products."

Even the most zealous partisans, among zoologists, of the assumed apish origin of man avow that all paleontological researches, up to this day, completely failed to discover *the slightest vestige of the anthropomorphic species*, which, according to their evolutionary theories, should have been the common ancestors both of the apes of the present time and of ourselves. This is not all: as according to the Darwinian theory, transformations take place only by *insensible transitions*, it follows that between man and the ape of the present time, the one that may appear to be nearest in kindred to man, there must have been a long series of intermediary beings. "But here again," says Agassiz (Atlantic Monthly, Jan., 1874, p. 96) "the reader seeks in vain for any evidence of a transition between man and his fellow creatures in the animal kingdom. Indeed, both with Darwin and his fol-

lowers, a great part of the argument is purely negative. It rests partly upon the assumption that, in the succession of ages, just those transition types have dropped out from the geological record which would have proved Darwinian conclusions, had those types been preserved, and that in the living animal the process is too subtle for detection. Darwin and his followers thus throw off the responsibility of proof with respect both to embryonic growth and geological succession. And Huxley (Study of Geology, p. 103) does not hesitate to speak still more emphatically against the Darwinian assumption, saying: "There is not the least evidence to prove that a form, in the slightest degree transitional between any two of the groups . . . either exists or has existed during that period of the earth's history which is recorded by the geologist." See Wainwright, "Scientific Sophisms." (Ch. 3, p. 35.)

Finally, whatever may be the resemblances between the ape and man, which may be found, they can never justify us in affirming a common ancestry.

The advocates of transformism, supposing, as they do, the possibility of change or evolution of species in animal life, argue from that to the fact itself, saying such a change is possible, therefore it must have occurred. Our reply is that such method of reasoning is altogether illegitimate. For, as sound logic teaches us, we may indeed infer the possibility of a given fact from the actual occurrence or existence of the fact itself. But, common sense tells us, we cannot infer the existence of the fact from its mere possibility. Because a thing is possible, it does not follow that it actually exists. *A posse ad esse non datur illatio.*

173. *Anatomical and physiological differences* between man and the ape.

Is there anything surprising in the fact that there should be osteological resemblances in the structure of the bones of men and of certain apes? Do we not define man as a *rational animal?* Is it not therefore evident that there must be resemblances between him and all unreasoning animals? If that were enough to make apes of us, it could be claimed with equal

reason that we are perfected *tigers or lions,* for the anatomical structure of the digestive organs, for instance, is exactly similar in us and in those carnivorous animals.

Besides, if, on the one hand, there be resemblances between man and the ape, there are, on the other, remarkable and *very characteristic* physiological differences.

In the first place, man is a walker, organized for a vertical, upright, standing position; the ape is a creeping animal; he can retain the vertical position but a short time; even when tamed he requires a staff to enable him to stand upright; the shape of his hands and feet, the size, structure and external aspect of the brain and skull, etc., differ so much in man and the ape most resembling him, that there must be in the heart of a naturalist a deep-seated hatred of his own excellence to lead him to conclude that anatomically these beings are of the same progeny as he himself. The single circumstance of the almost total absence of hair in man, particularly on the dorsal region, is so considerable that Wallace declared the difficulty resulting from it fatal to Darwinism. For this frank statement Darwin and Haeckel entertain no little ill-feeling against him; because in their view he has committed an imprudence in drawing attention to that undeniable fact. Nothing more frivolous, nothing more ridiculous indeed can be imagined than the explanations which the upholders of this simian origin of man endeavor to give for this nakedness of the human skin.

Let us see what is said by grave writers, and in particular by de Quatrefages. This is the way he concludes a report on the progress of anthropology in our times: "There exists no possible transition between man and the ape unless on the condition of upsetting *the laws of development*"; that is to say, on condition that materialists overthrow at one stroke the system which naturalists have built up at the expense of untiring labor. The anatomist Huxley, whose hatred of the supernatural does not prevent him from being at times loyal and frank, and who more than any one else, has the right to speak with authority to contemporary materialists, declares that "Each bone of the gorilla bears an imprint, by which we can

distinguish it from the corresponding human bone. In the present creation, at least," he adds, "no intermediary being fills up the chasm that separates man from the chimpanzee. To deny the existence of this impassable chasm would be as blameworthy as it is absurd." ("The Place of Man in Nature," preface, p. 79.) Carl Vogt himself, atheist and cynic unbeliever though he is, cannot find witticisms biting enough to taunt those of his friends who rank men and animals in the same category. Indeed, there is no one now who ventures to hold that there exists an immediate relationship or parentage between man and any of the anthropoid apes.

A striking contrast: "Man," says Darwin, "is descended from a hairy quadruped, furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in its habits, and an inhabitant of the old world." (Descent of Man, p. 175.)

"Buffon, the distinguished naturalist, and worthy representative of the opposite teaching, expresses himself in the following sublime words: 'Let man examine, analyze and scrutinize himself, and he will soon recognize the nobility of his nature; he will feel the existence of his immortal spirit, the soul, and will no longer disgrace himself: he will discover at once the immense, infinite distance which the Supreme Being, his Creator, has placed between him and the beasts.' (Zoology.)

"The superstition of man's ape-descent, which unhappily is gaining ground in some quarters, though in others we are glad to find a reaction setting in, arises from neglecting and despising the very basis and only essential condition, upon which man's real greatness rests, viz., his soul.

"Material-minded scientists, with mere sense perceptions, notice a resemblance between man's corporal frame—his mere external envelope—and that of the ape. They study with infinite pains the morphological and physiological formation and growth of the material part of the man and the beast; and, noting the close similarity in *some* respects, conclude an equally close similarity in *all* respects. Upon the only really vital distinction, namely, the soul, they lay no stress whatso-

ever; probably because its presence cannot be verified either by the scalpel or by the microscope.

"Yet, the likeness of man's material part to that of the beast is no recent discovery. Has he not always been considered, in all that relates to his physical being, an animal as truly as any other? Does he not live by food, and breathe the air, and feel the cold of winter and the heat of summer as truly as others? Will not the water drown and the fire burn one as readily as the other? And when death comes and arrests the action of the heart, and stiffens every limb, does not the body of the king and the philosopher corrupt and fall to pieces like that of the lowest beast and resolve as surely into the same gases and primordial elements?

"No one—be he saint or theologian—denies the animal nature of man's body: No! It is not *that* which we have in view when we extol and celebrate his grandeur and nobility. It is rather the great and immortal principle that animates that body—that stirs in every limb, that throbs in the overburdened heart, that strives in the seething brain—that immaterial essence that looks out of its prison house of clay, and gazing beyond this puny earth, interprets the signs in the heavens, measures the distance and magnitude of the stars, traces their paths through sidereal space, or turning to earth, reads its history in the very rocks, robs the seas and the mountains of their hidden treasures, and compels the powers of Nature to serve its purpose and to do its will. Yes, it is this active, energetic secret principle of life, of thought, of love, that we have in our minds when we think of man's greatness: not the corruptible vesture of vile clay with which it is momentarily encumbered, and which may be thrown away to-morrow and made to feast the worms. 'On earth there is nothing great but man,' says the poet, 'and in man there is nothing great but soul.'" (Bishop J. S. Vaughan, "Faith and Folly," p. 424.)

Our readers will, no doubt, be pleased to see our argument against the supposed apish descent of man greatly strengthened by the following forcible reflections of the late Cardinal

Manning in his excellent booklet entitled "The Religion of a Traveler," pp. 4-8:

"To account for man's existence independently of divine revelation, absurd theories have been seriously put forward: as, for instance, the spontaneous generation of life; the spontaneous development of intelligence; the deposit of life from a planet *in transitu*, or from 'germs of sentience,' or the germ of all life—Bathybios. These things have been written, printed, read, and—for the reputation of their authors—I hope, forgotten. The plain English of such theories is this: 'Anything you will, only no Creator.' But if there be no Creator, all these theories involve self-causation. No germs, or planets, or Bathybios can save them from absurdity. Bathybios is either created, self-created, or increate, that is, Eternal. Is it easier to believe an Eternal Bathybios than an Eternal Creator? An Eternal slime than an Eternal Intelligence?

"But some writers, evading the question of origin or causation, affirm that man is the perfect development of a lower animal; and this affirmation is made upon the comparison of the material and osseous structure of man with the material and osseous structure of the ape.

"It is not my purpose here to state the reasons why I do not believe the theory of evolution to be a scientific truth. I will confine what I say to one link in the argument, namely, the supposed evolution of man. It is the exclusive and primeval identity of the species for which we contend. There are indeed many daring hypotheses, but there are no facts of science rendering the evolution of man from a lower animal credible or probable. I will here confine myself to this one point.

"The argument may be stated thus. Comparing the structure of man with the structure of the ape, we find a group of similitudes in the form and organization of the bones. From this it is inferred that the anthropoid ape is germinal man: and that man is the anthropoid ape made perfect. But where are the gradations of transition? Where is the approximate ape or the incipient man? Why is every known ape an ape

and every known man a man? 'Man's place in creation' thus far is not among the apes, nor the place of the ape among men. The missing link is still wanting; the gulf has never been bridged across.

"Over and above all the violent absurdities of planetary, spontaneous, and Bathybiotic cosmogonies, the true indictment against the theory of man's descent from the ape is, that it is unscientific, unphilosophical, and based upon an inadequate and therefore an illusory induction.

"Let it be said that a group of similitudes between the corporeal or bony structure of the ape and of the man may be found: multiply and raise its details as high as you will. It there stands alone, one only group of similitudes: and those similitudes are found in the lowest region of man's nature.

"On the other hand, there are five groups of dissimilitudes between the ape and the man; and these in the highest regions of man's nature, to which no counterpart can be found in the ape.

"If, then, one group of similitudes refers man to the ape, five groups of dissimilitudes sever man from the ape.

"First, is the group of articulate language. If any one say that ape's chatter is man's speech I answer, the language of man has a philosophy of personality, of action, passion, time, relations, and conditions which we call grammar. Show me an indication, as slight as the closed eye of Proteus, of the grammar of apes.

"The second group is the power of abstract thought which has elaborated grammar, Newton's Principia, and the Electric Telegraph [and to-day we may add the Telephone, the Phonograph, the Wireless, the Radio Marvels, the Aeroplane].

"The third group is the creative mind which produced the Odyssey, the Divina Commedia, Hamlet, Guy Mannering, the Moses of Michael Angelo, and Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony.

"The fourth group is the moral reason, discernment, and

wisdom which have formed the high human life of man, and the jurisprudence and legislation of the world.

"The fifth group is the inward world of moral self-government and of conscious responsibility towards a supreme Legislator and Judge, and the forecast of the account that we must give to Him hereafter.

"These five groups of dissimilitudes are indeed no less patent than the one group of similitudes in our bodies and bones. Disputants may shut their eyes to them; but the human race still sees them. They were dropped from no planet; they were not self-caused by spontaneous generation. An induction that takes in only one group of the lowest phenomena and excludes five groups of the highest is neither scientific nor philosophical, but an outrage on philosophy, science, and common sense. Some men, however, would rather commit intellectual suicide than acknowledge their Maker."

174. It is now time to demonstrate in detail what has been stated above in general terms, and this we will accomplish by developing the following thesis:

THESIS.—MAN DIFFERS ESSENTIALLY FROM THE LOWER ANIMALS

PROOF.—*Intellectual, moral and religious differences.* Even if the physical resemblance of the ape with man were much greater than it is, that would prove absolutely nothing; for what makes man what he is, that which constitutes his true superiority, is not his skeleton; it is his soul, endowed with reason and free will, his moral and religious nature. In this there is not simply a difference of degree, but a difference in *nature,* a difference in *essence.* We shall further illustrate this fundamental truth.

A. *Intellectual Difference.* Man alone is endowed with intellect, for he alone can *reason,* he alone can *speak,* he alone can *invent,* he alone is indefinitely *perfectible.*

(*a*) *Man alone can reason.* Animals have received instinct, that is to say, a blind and spontaneous impulse, which is not the consequence of reflection, but of organization, and

which for that reason is irresistible, uniform, invariable. Animals act, but their actions are determined by that interior principle, without liberty and without consciousness of self. *Potius agitur quam agit* (He is rather acted upon than acting). He only perceives phenomena which strike the senses. Man, on the contrary, endowed with reason, has the consciousness of his personality and of his acts. These endowments separate him entirely from all the other living beings that surround him. He alone has abstract and universal ideas; he perceives necessary and eternal truths; he has the power of grasping the substantial causes of the phenomena which strike his senses, and not the phenomena alone, but also the laws that govern them. He alone can appreciate the beautiful, the true, and the good. Equipped with the laws of logic, he can reason, he can learn, and acquires each day more knowledge. In fine, he alone can form an idea of beings purely spiritual and of their acts. The animal can do nothing of all this. It is true that, by a kind of practical training, and by the use of the whip, we may make an animal do many things; but where is the man who, for instance, ever bethought himself of reasoning even with the best trained animal? Who can seriously suppose that an animal has intellect, that is to say, the power to form the universal ideas of, say right, wrong, wisdom, beauty, goodness, etc., to conceive abstract ideas, to abstract the intellectual, the universal, from the material images supplied by the senses? (See Vaughan, "Science and Religion," pp. 60-61.)

(*b*) *Man alone can speak.* We hear an animal utter cries by which it expresses what it feels, pleasure or pain; but it has no language properly so called. How could it express thoughts which it does not have? If it manifests its impressions, it is not consciously and freely; it is impelled thereto by its instinct, and it is utterly ignorant and unaware of this manifestation itself. The best-trained parrot is only a kind of repeating machine, a living phonograph. We know full well that some people boast much of the pretended discovery of the language of animals; but it cannot be denied that man alone can speak an artificial language, composed of *conven-*

tional sounds or signs, differing with different people, nations, places and times. The formation and use of language evidently requires the work of reason. Moreover, man alone speaks with the explicit and formal intention of expressing what he thinks; when he relates facts, when he converses, when he teaches, when he discusses whether theoretic or practical questions, he has *one single* purpose in mind, that of expressing his thoughts and communicating his knowledge to others.

(c) *Man alone is perfectible, and he alone can invent.* The animal never goes beyond the limits of its instinct. Undoubtedly, as we have said, by availing himself of the senses, of the sensitive memory and imagination of an animal, man may succeed in correcting it of certain faults, in causing it to acquire certain habits, in a word, in utilizing the instinct of an animal as he utilizes the forces of nature; but it can nevertheless be said that an animal is born completely furnished with all its natural qualities and it is not by itself perfectible. If left to its own instinct, the animal will ever remain the same as its species was at the commencement of the world. Bees build their little cells in the hive to-day precisely in the same manner as when Solomon observed them. In short, the habits of animals are the same now as when Aristotle, more than two thousand years ago, described them. This is so, because progress, perfectibility presuppose reflection, reasoning, general ideas, abstract mental operations, of which all animals are absolutely incapable.

B. *Moral Difference.* Unlike animals, man has a moral *sense;* the idea of duty imposes itself upon his conscience; not only does he distinguish between vice and virtue, but he has the faculty of enjoying the good which he does, and is liable to suffer from the evil which he may commit; he alone has the conception of a future life where there awaits him reward or punishment, according to his deserts. No doubt we see animals abstain from certain things, but it is by instinct and to avoid physical punishment, which their sensitive memory recalls to them; it is most assuredly not to avoid a moral

evil nor to escape remorse of conscience or punishment in another life.

If man feels himself responsible for his doings, if he is capable of meriting reward or punishment, it is because he possesses *liberty* or the faculty of *choosing the means* which lead to the end proposed. Now, this *free-will* belongs only to man. An animal has only instinct, which is blind, and which does not enable it to deliberate and to make a choice founded on reason and consideration. Such being therefore the case, they are consequently not responsible for what they do; if we punish, if we kill a noxious animal, it is not that we consider it guilty, but that we wish to prevent it from again causing damage by following the same instinct. It is altogether different with man; we admonish, we reward or punish him, because the impression made upon him by sensible things leaves him free to act in a manner independent of his inclinations or repugnances: "Man," says Bossuet, "is so much the master of his body that he may even sacrifice it for a greater good that he sets before himself."

C. *Religious Difference.* As to religiousness, that is, the tendency within us to seek God and to rise up to Him, which creates in us the desire, nay, the need, of putting curselves in relation with Him, all this is so exclusively the portion of man, that already in their day pagans proposed to define man as *a religious animal.* (Cicero, De leg., II, xi.)

This is what philosophy and common sense agree to say, and this doctrine is confirmed by the testimony of the most distinguished among the learned men of modern times. "Man alone," says Quatrefages, "has the conception of moral good and evil, independently of all physical welfare or suffering; he believes in a superior Being having the power to influence his destiny; he believes in the prolongation and permanence of his existence beyond this life. . . . Nothing like this, or analogous to it, has ever been met with in any animal."

As to those who claim that there are people without any religion, we shall simply oppose to their assertion a few eminent authorities: "I declare," says de Quatrefages, "that I do not know of one single tribe, which could be called, with

any appearance of reason, *atheistic.*" In another place he says: "Called upon as a teacher to pass in review all human races, I have sought for evidences of atheism among the most inferior tribes as well as among the highest; I found it nowhere, except in individual cases or in certain schools of professional systematic unbelievers, more or less limited in number, as was seen in Europe during the last century or even in our day. Atheism is nowhere to be found except as an erratic movement. . . . Such is the result of a search which I may be permitted to call conscientious. . . . 'However degraded the African populations may be,' says the celebrated Livingstone, 'it is not necessary to speak to them of the existence of God or of the future life; these two truths are *universally acknowledged in Africa.*'" (The Human Species, Book IV, chapters 34–35.) (See n. 3.)

175. Conclusion. We can therefore conclude that, independently of considerable differences between the organization of man and that of animals, there lies between them, as regards intellectual, moral and religious relations, an impassable distance. This triple difference is perhaps less striking than that which relates to organization, because it does not fall under the senses; we cannot touch it with the scalpel; but in reality it is much greater than that which separates the animal from the vegetable kingdom.

We shall now recapitulate, in the words of the Abbé Caussette, the reflections which precede: "How could it ever have come to the mind of a reasonable man to put himself on the same level as the ape? What progress has the ape ever realized during the many centuries that he gamboled in the forests? See on the contrary man proudly marching along, in the midst of the treasures of the mind contained in the libraries and museums of Rome, Paris, Munich, London, or in the midst of the marvels of a Universal Exposition, all of them the products of his intellect and skill. Hear him: I am the author of the *Iliad* and of the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas, I am called Plato, Augustine, Bossuet; I composed the music of Rossini and of Gluck; I have caused the old world and the new to thrill at the accents of Pindar,

Euripides, Dante, Shakespeare, Racine, Corneille; I built the Parthenon, and launched into the air the cupola of the Vatican Basilica; I have weighed the stars in the balance; I have analyzed their elements and have followed the course of the suns in the depths of space; I have discovered unknown continents and sailed as master on all the seas; I have brought into the light of day and studied a world of animalcules; and I have succeeded by the achievements of medical and surgical science in prolonging the average life-time of my fellow-men; bending the forces of nature to my will, I have harnessed steam to my chariot, and spoken to my fellow-men from one end of the world to the other with the speed of the electric current; I have made the civilization of Babylon, of Athens, of Rome and of Christian Europe. When they will show us the cities, the books, the artistic and literary masterpieces and the discoveries made by the apes or other animals, from which some men have wished to trace my descent, then, and then only, I might begin to think that these men are speaking seriously."—"Le Bon Sens de la Foi" (The Common Sense of Faith).

The great Oratorian Cardinal Newman brings forward a well-known fable to illustrate his subject, and I am taking the liberty of making use of it to throw a light on mine. "The Man once invited the Lion to be his guest, and received him with princely hospitality. The Lion had the run of a magnificent palace, in which there were a vast many things to admire. There were large saloons and long corridors, richly furnished and decorated, and filled with a profusion of fine specimens of sculpture and painting, the works of the first masters in either art. The subjects represented were various; but the most prominent of them had an especial interest for the noble animal who stalked by them. It was that of the Lion himself; and as the owner of the mansion led him from one apartment to the other, he did not fail to direct his attention to the indirect homage which these various groups and tableaux paid to the importance of the Lion tribe.

"There was, however, one remarkable feature in all of them, to which the host, silent as he was from politeness,

seemed not at all insensible; that diverse as were these representations, in one point they all agreed—that the man was always victorious, and the lion was always overcome. The man had it all his own way, and the lion was but a fool, and served to make him sport. There were exquisite works in marble, of Samson rending the lion like a kid, and young David taking the lion by the beard and choking him. There was the man who ran his arm down the lion's throat and held him fast by the tongue; and there was that other who, when carried off in his teeth, contrived to pull a penknife from his pocket and lodge it in the monster's heart. Then there was a lion hunt, or what had been such, for the brute was rolling around in the agonies of death, and his conqueror on his bleeding horse was surveying him from a distance, there was a gladiator from the Roman ampitheatre in mortal struggle with his tawny foe, and it was plain who was getting the mastery. There was a lion in a net, a lion in a trap, four lions yoked in harness were drawing the car of a Roman emperor, and elsewhere stood Hercules, clad in the lion's skin, and with the club that demolished him. In short, there was no misconception or excess of indignity which was thought too great for the lord of the forest and the king of the brutes. After he had gone over the mansion, his entertainer asked him what he thought of the splendors it contained, and he in reply did full justice to the riches of its owner and the skill of its decorators; but, he added, 'lions would have fared better had lions been the artists.' " (Lectures on Catholicism in England.)

From the preceding argumentation it evidently appears that the theory of transformation, or change of species in animal life, particularly if applied to man, is utterly untenable. It is in direct opposition to his mode of origin as attested by the Bible (Gen. 2, 7, 21-23). It is contradicted by all the known geological and paleontological records, and has been denounced and condemned in no measured terms by eminent naturalists as an altogether gratuitous, nay, absurd, hypothesis. As Charles Elam, M.D., tells us (*Contemporary Review*, Dec., 1876): "It has been weighed in the balance and

found wanting. It is as unsatisfactory and inconsequent in argument as it is charming in style." On this account, His Eminence, Cardinal Manning, does not hesitate to reject it as neither scientific nor philosophical, but rather an outrage upon philosophy, science and common sense. To prove the truth of these denunciations, we need but briefly to recall the following philosophical reasons:

In the first place, what is precisely meant by the term *species?* By species is meant a collection or assemblage of similar individuals descending, by successive generations, from one common, original parental stock. Hence, the species of a given individual is, for all intents and purposes, actually identical with the *nature* or *essence* of that individual. Now, sound philosophy teaches us that the essences or intrinsic natures of things are in themselves immutable, and therefore can be destroyed and changed only by the power of the Supreme Maker that created them. In fact, if we consult observation and experience, we find that the natural way or law by which man's material organism is produced, is generation from pre-existing individuals of the same species. To deny this and suppose the intervention of some other natural process or external forces is to assert what is contrary to all past and present experience, and to assume what has no foundation whatever in fact. Nay, it must be said that reason as well as experience proves exactly the opposite. For no being naturally tends to its own destruction; but if there should inhere in a being an intrinsic force impelling it to transform itself, however gradually, into a being of another species, the being possessing such a force would tend to destroy or annihilate itself: for when the species or essence is radically changed, the being itself possessing that essence is practically annihilated or destroyed. This is absurd, for omnipotent power alone can annihilate, as it alone can create, there being the same naturally impassable chasm between existence and annihilation that there is between non-existence and creation. Moreover, every definite nature or being has its own definite, determined forces and laws; and it is exactly from the knowledge and analysis of these forces and laws that

we are enabled to judge of its nature, and to assign to it the category to which it belongs. We freely admit that such a being may, under special circumstances and surroundings, variously modify its operations and produce many external variations, confined to certain limits, but always within the bounds of the same species. It may also, under unfavorable accidental contingencies, deteriorate from its original type and perfection and give rise to productions inferior to itself. But it can never cause operations and acts proper of another species, nor produce effects superior to itself. Because no being can impart to others what it does not itself possess, just as there can be no effect without its proportionate cause. Were we to admit the transformation of species by the agency of purely natural causes, particularly in reference to man, and hold with the Darwinian evolutionists that animals of one species can produce effects and results proper of the intrinsic activity of another species, we should be logically driven to admit that a being is capable of producing another being superior to itself,—which is repugnant alike to sound philosophy and common sense. In concluding this subject we feel justified in stating that, whilst, on the one hand, the advocates of evolutionary transformation, as applied to the explanation of man's origin, are all along arguing against the dictates of reason, against divine revelation, as well as in opposition to the results of observation and experience, as testified by distinguished scientific men (n. 171), on the other hand, its opponents are in perfect harmony with the teachings of sound philosophy, with the discoveries of geological science, with the authority of Holy Writ, and with the judgment of the most eminent scientists of our day. On which of the two sides described above truth may likely be found, the attentive and conscientious reader will easily decide.

Neither embryology nor comparative anatomy provides the necessary facts to establish a rational doctrine of evolution, that is the continuous formation of higher from lower forms or species by a series of changes extending over long periods of time. It has been remarked that embryologists and comparative anatomists, in elaborating their evolutionary

process, leave out of sight three most important factors, which handicap, nay completely nullify their attempts, and they are as follows:

1. They begin with a living cell, but they do not account for its life. The non-believer in evolution here naturally and very properly asks: Whence did that primitive life come? To this the advocates of Evolution give no satisfactory reply. They lean on the broken reed of spontaneous generation, which all leading scientists now reject (n. 168).

2. They do not explain by what power animals differentiate. They tell us that the cells or ova in the early stages of development remarkably *resemble* each other, but that, in the gradual progress, they also remarkably differ from each other.

They are here on the horns of a dilemma, as they can neither explain the resemblances nor the differences, and, willy-nilly they are forced to admit that no power other than the Creator, the First Cause, can direct the growing cell to become a fish, a reptile, a bird or a mammal, each originated from the cell or ovum of its parents; for it is inconceivable that from one and the same egg or cell all the various animals could proceed. It is quite evident that here design, law and order are at work.

"*Digitus Dei est hic*—this is the finger of God." (Exod. 8, 19.) It is useless here to resort to accident or chance, for they can have no place in the production of organized beings: no number of secondary causes can, in this instance, replace the First Cause.

3. Evolutionists have no explanation to give of the permanency or stability of leading types. According to them, living things and their species are eternally changing. But, in spite of their contention, men, whose authority they cannot question, advocate permanence of type, and consequently, of species. Huxley, the eminent biologist, holds that "some animals have not changed perceptibly for 30,000 years." Agassiz, the distinguished naturalist, has this to say on the question at issue: "One thing only we know absolutely, the primitive types have remained permanent and unchanged in

the long succession of ages from the earliest geological periods to the present day." (In *Atlantic Monthly,* January, 1879, p. 99.) But what is most strange and unexpected, Darwin himself, in a letter written to Bentham, definitely states: "When we descend to details we can prove that no one *species has changed.* I, for one, conscientiously declare that I never feel surprised at any one sticking to belief in immutability. I remember too well my endless oscillations of doubt and difficulty." What then becomes, we ask, of man's descent from simian progenitors, if species and types are immutable? This is only one of the many inconsistencies and contradictions of Darwin and his adherents; and we are not surprised, for truth alone is changeless and consistent throughout.

The late Professor John Tyndall, carried away by enthusiasm for Darwin and his evolutionary theory, had the boldness and the questionable tact of applying to that hypothesis the famous dilemma of wise Gamaliel (Acts, 5, 38-39), which hitherto has been exclusively verified in the ever-enduring stability of Catholic Christianity. The learned physicist said to his audience: "Fear not the evolution hypothesis: steady yourselves in its presence upon that faith in the ultimate triumph of truth, which was expressed by old Gamaliel when he said—'If it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it: if it be of man, it will come to naught.' " (Fragments of Science, p. 151.) Professor Tyndall has been, unwittingly of course, a prophet of ill omen. Under the fierce light of scientific inquiry the notorious hypothesis has been dissipated, as it was found not to possess a core of truth. St. George Mivart: "Darwinism, as a solution of the origin of species, is a puerile hypothesis, and has ignominiously failed. It has been really abandoned by Darwin himself as untenable." (Lessons from Nature, p. 280.)

Professor Vernon Kellogg, though a materialist, writes: "There has been a steady and culminating stream of scientific criticism of the Darwinian selection theories, reaching, in the last few years, vast proportions. The once triumphant Darwinism has had but an ephemeral existence, and has been abandoned by professors of geology, botany, zoology, paleon-

tology and pathology in the Universities of Berlin, Paris, Vienna, Strasburg, Tübingen, Amsterdam, Columbia, etc." (Darwinism To-day, p. 26.) The following additional quotations on the discomfiture of Darwinian Evolution are taken from Samuel Wainwright, D.D., author of the work entitled "Scientific Sophisms, a Review of Current Theories Concerning Apes and Men":

Dr. Charles Elam: "A flimsy framework of Hypothesis."

Professor Tyndall: "Devoid of experimental demonstration."

Professor Huxley: "The transmutation of species not proven. The doctrine of Evolution involves the assumption of spontaneous generation, viz., the production of a living being from dead matter, an assumption that has no experimental evidence in its favor, and is supported by no valid or intelligible reason." (His Presidential Address to the British Association, 1870.)

Agassiz, the renowned biologist, says of the Darwinian theory: "I consider the transmutation theory as a scientific mistake, untrue in its facts, unscientific in its method, and mischievous in its tendency." (Essay on Classification, p. 108.) (See Hettinger, "Natural Religion," p. 136.)

A writer in the *Times* (London, June 9, 1905) thus pictures the situation at the opening of the twentieth century: "No one possessed of a sense of humor can contemplate without amusement the battle of Evolution crimsoned (dialectically) with the gore of innumerable combatants. Here are zoologists, embryologists, anthropologists, Darwinians and Lamarckians and many more, whom it would be tedious to enumerate. Never was seen such a medley: and yet they all claim to represent Science, the serene, the majestic, the absolutely sure, the only vice-gerent of Truth. The plain fact is that though some agree in this or that, there is not a single point in which all agree. Battling for Evolution they have torn it to pieces; nothing is left on their own showing save a few fragments strewn about the arena (which remind the spectators of the Irish legend about the Kilkenny cats). This turn of the tide is an important fact to realize since it serves

us as an antidote to the assumption so often thrust upon us that the progress of evolutionary science irresistibly tends away from religious belief and threatens to achieve its destruction."

Attitude of the Catholic Church and Its Loyal Subjects towards the Question of Evolution

The essential work of the Catholic Church as a divinely appointed organ of truth is eminently conservative. It is to maintain incorrupt the *depositum fidei,* the body of revealed doctrines confided to its keeping by Jesus Christ, its founder: to convey that message to men for all ages to come, without addition or diminution. (Apocalypse, 22, 18-19.) Hence the Church, in its official capacity, is indifferent to scientific theories, except when they contradict revealed truth either directly or indirectly. Then, to safeguard the faith of its subjects, such theories are either declared inimical to the purity of Christian belief or even expressly condemned. Thus speaks the Vatican Council: "Nor does the Church forbid that each of these sciences in its sphere should make use of its own principles and its own method, but while recognising this just liberty, it stands watchfully on guard, lest sciences, setting themselves against the divine teaching, or transgressing their own limits, should invade and disturb the domain of Faith." (*Const. de Fide,* c. 4.) On this account no thoroughgoing Catholic can tolerate the application of Evolution to the origin of man. Here at once the Church becomes interested, for its doctrine about the beginning and nature of man is immediately involved. Darwinism, the theory advocating man's animal descent, being directly opposed to revealed truth, as contained in Holy Writ (Gen. 2, 7) and the records of Tradition, cannot be countenanced by the Church. For man possesses a spiritual soul, the principle of life, the result of God's creative act; neither does his bodily organism descend from animal progenitors, as it was directly produced by the action of God. The theory of Evolution, however, in as much as it makes abstraction from the origin of life and origin

of man, in the present order of Providence, rests on the general principle admitted by St. Augustine, St. Thomas and the Schoolmen that God does not always act by direct or personal intervention, if secondary, created causes can achieve the same results. Therefore the hypothesis of Evolution, when restricted within legitimate bounds, cannot be said to be opposed to Faith or contradictory to reason. When considered under this aspect we find it supported by facts, the argumentative force of which it is unreasonable to deny or reject. But no form of Evolution can be accepted by Catholics, unless it is based on theistic principles, postulating the intervention of the Creator for the production of the first organisms and admitting the essential immutability of organic species. The study of this important question leads us to the following conclusions:

(1) The origin of life, unknown to science, is absolutely beyond its competence to ascertain by its exclusively proper means, observation and experiment.

(2) There is no trace of even a merely probable argument in favor of the animal origin of man considered from a scientific point of view.

(3) Changes extending beyond the range of variation in the human species have not been strictly demonstrated either experimentally or historically. Hence we have in mankind many races but only one human species, the *homo sapiens.* (See de Quatrefages, "The Human Species," Book II, chapters x–xi.)

In connection with the theory of Evolution it is important to know what were the religious tenets of Darwin himself, one of its principal founders and chief promoters. Such a knowledge will serve as an index to the right understanding of the motives that led him to the composition of his "Origin of Species" and the "Descent of Man." It must be said in justice to Darwin that he cannot be held responsible for the conclusion drawn from his theory by a number of his ardent disciples, such as Haeckel, who hold that Evolution does away with the necessity of a Creator. But Darwin repudiated that idea, which he designated as "a most monstrous exaggera-

tion," and in his "Descent of Man" (p. 106), he was frank enough to write: "The question whether there exists a Creator and Ruler of the Universe has been answered in the affirmative by some of the highest Intellects that have ever lived." So far so good. But the following authentic information cannot be to his credit as a Christian, if he ever claimed to be one. In his life and letters edited by his son Francis (vol. I, p. 279) Darwin himself tells us that "The old argument from design in Nature fails now that the law of Natural Selection has been discovered."

In his declining years he received a letter from a student of the University of Jena inquiring what he held on the subject of Divine revelation and the future life. He answered: "As for myself I do not think that any such Revelation has ever been made. Concerning the existence of a Future Life each one must draw his own conclusion from indetermined and contradictory probabilities." (*Pall Mall Gazette,* quoted by *The Tablet* for December 30, 1882.)

IV. The Unity of Origin and Species of All Human Races; or Their Descent from One Original Couple, Adam and Eve

176. "*God,*" says St. Paul (Acts 17, 26), "*hath made of one all mankind to dwell upon the whole face of the earth.*" It is an article of faith that all men who *now* people the earth descend from Adam; this dogma is moreover intimately allied with that of original sin, redemption, etc. It is, however, rejected by the *Polygenists,* who would see among men *many different species.* The *Monogenists,* on the contrary, claim that all men form only *one species,* though within this species there are found many different *races.*

Before proving that the Scriptures are in no way in disaccord with true science, let us make a few preliminary remarks.

177. First Remark. The Bible does not precisely affirm unity of *species,* but unity of *origin;* that is, the Adamic unity of all the human races, or the fact of the descent of all human races from one primitive, original couple, Adam and Eve

We maintain, however, and we shall prove not only that mankind has a *common origin*, but that it forms one *single species*.

Second Remark. By the avowal of its most determined supporters, the polygenist theory dates, scientifically speaking, only from the last few years. Moreover, it has but very few upholders, whilst the immense majority of scientists hold to the unity of a common parental stock. We might cite Blumenbach, Pritchard, Linnæus, Buffon, Cuvier, Van Baer, Van Meyer, Burdach, Etienne and Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, de Blainville, Hugh Miller, De Serres, Flourens, de Quatrefages, Milne-Edwards, Lyell, Huxley. It is therefore absolutely false to say that on this point science and revelation are in conflict. It is to be observed, furthermore, that the traditions of all peoples, whether oral or recorded in their most ancient books, agree in the most striking manner in tracing the descent of the whole human race from the single Adamic couple.

Third Remark. What a singular circumstance we have here! Certain scientists affirm the impossibility of the common descent of the negro and the white man, and yet they admit the simian origin of man as a reasonable hypothesis, or even as a fact. Whence can come such an aberration of the mind, if not from the persistent determination of certain men to deny the existence of a personal God, the Creator of the Universe, and of man in particular? As Cardinal Manning well said, the plain English of such theories is this: "Anything you will, only no Creator."

What we have just said is sufficient to destroy the force of the objections made by the Polygenists against the Bible. Let us, however, establish by a direct demonstration our proposition that all the present inhabitants of the earth descend from Adam.

178. First Argument. We may consider it as an axiom in zoology that all individuals that can reproduce themselves and indefinitely perpetuate their progeny are of *one and same species*. "Species," says Mr. Flourens, "consists essentially of two elements or ideas; that of *resemblance* and that of *filiation*. It can be defined: A collection of individuals pos-

sessing the same common characteristics, which they transmit, by means of reproduction, to other individuals capable of preserving these fundamental characteristics, whilst susceptible, at the same time, of minor and secondary variations." Now, experience proves that human races, even the most degenerate, if united with the most perfect races, produce individuals indefinitely fruitful. For this reason quite a large number of scientific men admit in mankind the unity not only of origin, but also of species. But, making abstraction from this question, one thing remains absolutely certain and evident, and that is the notable resemblance or similarity among all the human individuals, to whatsoever race they may happen to belong. In fact—

(*a*) The physical organization is the same in all men as to all essential constituent parts; dissimilarities are insignificant, if we compare them with those which we observe, for instance, between a spaniel and a bull-dog or a hound, though it is universally acknowledged that they all belong to the same species. In all human races we observe the same cerebral convolutions, the same number of teeth, placed in the same order and of the same length, the same shape of the hands as well as opposition of the thumb and index finger, the same upright position, the same vocal organs, brought to perfection. And here we should not lose sight of an important observation made by Herder: "Generally," says he, "we count only four principal races of men, but in reality the varieties are almost countless. We find all the intermediaries; colors blend into each other, and even in the same race the appearance of individuals differs in color, as well as in structure."

(*b*) In the *intellectual, moral* and *religious* respect, the resemblance is none the less great. All men are endowed with reason; they have the same faculty of speaking articulate language, of expressing their thoughts with the sole view of communicating them to others; even the negroes are capable of remarkable moral and intellectual development; the most degraded races can receive a progressive civilization; all possess the moral and religious sentiment, though in different degrees.

Second Argument. It is for those who advance a *new* doctrine to bring forth their proofs. But the Polygenists have nothing certain to oppose to our arguments. In the first place, they cannot demonstrate that it is impossible that many races of men should be found *within the range of a single species;* much less can they prove the impossibility of the descent of all men from a single couple. On our side, on the contrary, we can sufficiently account for the differences which are seen in the different races. It is well established that climate, habits of life and heredity may bring about this diversity. However, even if we were unable to explain the causes of these differences, our inability would be in nowise surprising, because it is a question of *origin,* and it is well known that questions of this kind are generally inaccessible or mysterious.

179. Remarks. 1. The dissimilarities which are seen in the different races of men are not so important as some naturalists pretend. One of the most striking things noticeable when men of different races are brought together is the color of their skin. This coloring, which varies from a dull white to the brownish black of the negro, is due, as physiologists tell us, to a pigment, a coloring matter contained in the cells of the skin. Now, it is a well-known fact, proved by experience, that this coloring can be modified by change of climate and mode of life; that it depends in part upon the air, the mean temperature of the country inhabited, light especially, and even upon the social conditions under which we live. The skin of a European ends by becoming brown under the tropics, whilst it becomes almost a copperish red in Guiana; in the Marquesas Islands it takes a bronzed tint, like that of the native islanders themselves. We know that the labors of the field are sufficient to produce the tawny complexion called sun-burn. On the other hand, the color of the negro becomes lighter in temperate climates. No doubt, the distance is great between the white of the Swede and the black of the negro of the Congo or of the Carribee Islands; but, as we have seen, it is by passing to different latitudes, through a great number of imperceptible tints that we notice these

gradual changes from white or yellow to bronze, brown or black. These differences, brought about by different surroundings, are no less observable in animals than in men. In Guinea, fowl and eggs are entirely black; in the north, on the contrary, animals easily change to white in winter, unless kept confined in houses. Briefly, color is so much an accessory thing that a skillful breeder can, in three or four years, give to a pigeon, for instance, any color he may choose.

Horses do not possess a more distinctive character; specialists admit this. Their hair may be curled and woolly or long and smooth, according to hygienic conditions, country and mingling of races.

As to the *capacity* or size of the skull, its *weight* and *form*, there is greater variety between the different *races* of men than between the different *races* of animals. Why, then, should these differences, which do not force us to conclude against the unity of species, when they affect animals, why should they compel us to question this unity when they concern men? Besides, Morton, the American naturalist, though agreeing on this point with other Polygenists, has, nevertheless, shown in measuring 1200 skulls that the objection which was sought to be drawn against our thesis from the capacity of the skull, is not worth considering. In a series of 964 human skulls examined by Wagner, the skull of the celebrated Doctor Dupuytren ranked only as No. 179, and that of the renowned mineralogist, Hansman, as No. 641! "Facts are stubborn things," says Flourens, "and we must submit to their verdict; the size of the brain bears no proportion to the greatness of the intellect." The same observation holds good as to the shape of the skull and its *facial angle*. The facial angle is, according to Camper, on an average 70 degrees in the negro and 85 in the purest Greek type. This difference of 15 degrees cannot evidently constitute a specific difference, considering especially that between the negro and the Grecian type we find all the intermediate degrees of the scale. Much greater is the difference between the facial angle of the negro and the adult chimpanzee: with the latter it hardly reaches 35 degrees. Haeckel himself acknowledges that we cannot base the classi-

fication of the human species upon the form of the skull. There are heads that are long, others short, and all the intermediary variations among the same people.

A remarkable circumstance is this: among prognathous people, whose jaws project beyond the upper part of the face, so as to resemble the muzzle of animals, the individuals are not born with this deformity; it grows upon them with age; it is met with, moreover, among all nations, even the most civilized. (See Vigouroux, "Les Livres Saints et la critique rationaliste," vol. 3, ch. v., The Sacred Scriptures and the Rationalists, pp. 299-391; Brownson, Works, vol. IX.)

2. To understand how the descendants of the first man could have peopled the most distant islands, it is enough to remark that in no place is communication between countries more difficult than among the islands of the South Seas, and yet it is proved most clearly that these difficulties have been overcome: the language, the habits, the traditions and the religion of the people of the Pacific resemble each other so much as to allow no doubt as to the fact that they must have all migrated to these distant lands in some remote period of the past. (See de Quatrefages, "Unité de l'Espèce humaine"—Unity of the Human Species, p. 199.)

As to the *peopling of America,* it is not quite certain that the American continent was always separated from Asia as it is to-day; and, at all events, the passage from Asia to America only takes thirty-six hours. Moreover, the cold stream, which starts from the Arctic ocean by Behring's straits, often carries with it toward the American continent boats lost or shipwrecked in the Pacific ocean. And, finally, it is established by proofs of various kinds that many nations of the old world have contributed to the peopling of America; we may mention in particular the Phœnicians, the Norwegians, the Scandinavians, the East Indians, the Chinese and the Japanese The yellow race is represented even to this day in Brazil by the Botocoudos.

3. The objection against the unity of the human race drawn from *linguistics* is without any value whatever. In fact, what relation can there be between the different species

of men and the conventional meaning attached to certain sounds, especially as this meaning, as well as the sounds themselves, is subject to many variations among the same people? Who does not know that articulated speech is subject to constant changes, and that it takes but little time for a savage people to change its language? We cannot reason in the same way with regard to languages spoken by semi-civilized people, as it is done with elaborated languages permanently fixed and determined by writing and enriched by literary monuments. Men even of the same country are far from exactly following the same grammar and the same dictionary. It has been estimated that the English peasantry use only about three hundred words, though the English language, as it appears from its standard dictionaries, contains more than one hundred thousand words. There are, indeed, philologists, even among those who do not admit the primitive unity of language, Renan among others, who think it impossible to draw from their opinions any proof against the primitive unity of the human species. "Whatever may be the diversity that exists in the forms and roots of human languages," says Max Müller, "we cannot draw from this diversity any conclusive argument against the possibility of the common origin of these same languages." We may add that the science of linguistics itself tends more and more to prove the unity of origin of all men; it is thus that, thanks to this science of linguistics, learned men have been able to prove the common origin of peoples who inhabit the opposite extremities of the earth.

For a further development of this important subject, the reader is referred to the following authors: Cardinal Mazzella, S.J., "De Deo Creante," nn. 490-525; Palmieri, S.J., "De Deo Creante et Elevante," th. xxvii; Urráburu, S.J., "Psychologia," Disp. 2da, p. 1035; Moigno, "Les Splendeurs de la Foi" (The Splendors of Faith), II, vi, 492-602; Quatrefages, "Unité de l'Espèce humaine" (The Unity of the Human Species), III, v, pp. 299-391; Vigouroux, "Les Livres Saints et la critique rationaliste" (The Sacred Scriptures and the Rationalists, vol. III; Hettinger, "Natural Religion," ch. iv; "Materialism," pp. 112-156; Thein,

"Christian Anthropology," pp. 255-436; Schanz, "Christian Apology," I, xvii; Brownson, Works, vol. IX, p. 318, "The Primeval Man." (See also vol. IX, p. 457.)

V. Antiquity of the Human Species

180. It is a well-established fact that life did not always exist upon earth, and that among beings endowed with life man is *the most recent.* But whilst it seems to result from the reading of Genesis that the appearance of man upon the earth goes back only some thousands of years, there are naturalists and historians who do not hesitate to assert that mankind is, at least, one hundred thousand years old, some even claim that it goes back one hundred thousand centuries. This antiquity, it is easily understood, is especially necessary for upholding the theory of those who would make us descend from anthropoid apes. It would, indeed, require, according to their view, all these centuries to bring us from the bestial state to the intellectual, moral and religious level which is found to exist even among the most ancient peoples. Let us see what is taught concerning the age of man by the Bible and by Science. We will see that here also there is no conflict between these two legitimate means of knowledge.

181. 1. Uncertainty of Biblical Chronology. The Scripture says nothing precise concerning *the age of man,* and the Church, which has no mission to determine questions of chronology, has never decided anything about the matter. There does, indeed, exist a chronology called Biblical, because based upon documents and data taken from the Bible. But what is the value of this chronology, the mere work of man? To realize what it is worth, it is enough to say that there are almost as many chronological systems of the Bible as there are interpreters or exegetists. Already in 1738 Des Vignolles enumerated over two hundred calculations showing differences ranging between thirty and thirty-five centuries, and in spite of all efforts it has hitherto been found impossible to clear up this chaos. The learned Abbé Le Hir declares that "biblical chronology remains undecided; it is for human science to find the date of the creation of our species."

Whence this uncertainty? It arises from various causes, the following being the principal:

(*a*) We do not know the real import of figures or numbers used by the sacred authors, even in the Pentateuch or the other inspired books; all the ancient texts, which we possess, are as to this matter in complete disaccord. For instance, according to the Hebrew text and that of the Vulgate (the Latin version approved as authentic by the Catholic Church) are reckoned 1656 years from the fall of Adam to the deluge; and from Noah to Abraham 292 years; whilst according to the text of the Septuagint, these figures are respectively 2262 and 1172; and, finally, according to the Samaritan Pentateuch, the figures are 1307 and 942. This disagreement, however, should not surprise us. No one can be ignorant of the fact that nothing is more easily changed than figures in successive transcriptions, especially at a time when each people had its own particular division of time, and the greater number of nations followed methods of counting altogether different from ours. Errors, either in the *copies* or in the *versions*, were all the more likely to occur from the fact that in those remote times the Hebrews frequently used the letters of their alphabet to designate numbers, and many of these letters very much resemble each other. Evidently God was not obliged to perform miracles for the purpose of preventing alterations in the dates of Scripture, because this does not refer either to morals or to dogma, and does not affect the substance of the sacred text; our salvation and the fulfillment of our duties are in nowise interfered with or endangered by the fact that we are in ignorance as to the exact number of years that elapsed between the fall of Adam and the coming of the Redeemer.

(*b*) We have no assurance that we possess *complete genealogical lists.* As historical documents concerning this epoch, we only have the lists of antediluvian and postdiluvian patriarchs, contained in the fifth and eleventh chapters of Genesis. We know that there exists in these lists at least one omission, and perhaps one interpolation. Are there not more omissions? This is probable, and the supposition is all the more plausible for the reason that Oriental people, in their genealogies, were

careful only about one point: to follow the direct line, without troubling themselves about the intermediary series; hence, whole generations, even centuries, may in this manner have been left out of their calculations. This remark of Mr. Wallon is confirmed by the fact that quite a number of similar omissions are known with certainty to exist in other books of Scripture. These systematic or voluntary omissions seem to have been purposely devised as a help in mnemonics, viz., with the object of aiding the memory, and thus facilitating the retention of the chronological record. It is thus that St. Matthew has excluded, evidently with intention, the names of three kings perfectly well known, in order to help the memory in retaining the list of names forming the genealogical tree of the Messiah. These omissions, whose number is unknown, make it impossible to fix the exact time of man's first appearance upon the earth.

(*c*) The variations, or variants, which we meet in these figures coming from these three sources are due to another cause, no less important. The Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch regularly *add* a hundred years to many dates found in the Hebrew version. And why so? We are obliged to answer with St. Augustine, who had already noticed this fact: "No explanations are given, or if any are put forward, they are unacceptable."

At all events, as the chronology of the Septuagint has been adopted by the Fathers of the Greek Church and by the greater number of those of the Latin Church, there can be nothing to prevent us from accepting and defending it, at least provisionally. According to this calculation, mankind would have an antiquity of 8065 years. If these figures are not enough to satisfy the legitimate requirements of history and paleontology, there is nothing to forbid our admitting all the modifications, which they may rightfully claim.

But are not the investigations of secular science able to remove the doubts left, even after a conscientious study of the sacred texts? This is what we shall now examine, according to the data respectively furnished by paleontology and by the history of ancient peoples.

182. II. Data of Science. (*a*) Geology and Paleontology. Notwithstanding the venturous calculations, utterly destitute of proof, put forward by a number of geologists and palæontologists, Science up to this date brings out nothing absolutely certain as to the age of man. No human remains have as yet been found in the strata or layers of the *tertiary* epoch. The Association for the Advancement of Science, at its meeting at Blois, France, in 1884, commissioned forty of its members to study the seaside deposits of Thenay belonging to the tertiary epoch, and containing, it was asserted, a great quantity of flint stones cut and polished by the hand of man. After minute search, the majority of these learned men remained convinced that man had not yet appeared upon the earth up to that time, and that the cleavage of the flint was simply due to physical causes. Other deposits, for instance, those discovered in the neighborhood of Aurillac and of Lisbon, which were also supposed to contain geological deposits affording evidence of man's existence at a very remote period of time, are now considered as entirely void of any consideration whatever.

As to the *quaternary* epoch, where a great number of human fossils are found, let us listen to what is said of it by de Lapparent, a master of geological science: "That part of the modern era designated as the *quaternary* epoch is characterized, it is said, by the appearance of man upon the earth. . . . However near it may be to our times, this epoch is still full of mystery to us. The order in the successive deposits is at times very obscure. The absence or the rarity of organic remains renders the determination of relative ages a particularly delicate task. Science has not yet reached the point of having secured a chronometer which enables it to measure with precision the time elapsed even during the period which has immediately preceded our own. It is wise for us to wait until, at some future time, this mystery will be solved and this conquest of human science achieved; meanwhile it is enough for us to have shown how insufficient is the basis of all these calculations, which so lavishly allow almost indefinite periods

of hundreds and thousands of centuries between the different phases of the quaternary epoch." (See n. 161.)

This gives us the last word of Science up to the present time. Lyell himself, generally so inclined to exaggeration in this matter, admits that "In the present condition of our knowledge, the attempts to compare the chronological periods of upheaval . . . and subsiding glaciers . . . must be considered mere conjecture." Other eminent paleontologists hold the same language, and Carl Vogt does not hesitate to declare that "the efforts made up to this day to establish a method for chronologically measuring the time elapsed since man's appearance upon the earth have not been crowned with success." And yet this declaration did not prevent him, by piling hypothesis upon hypothesis, from attributing 57,600 years of existence to a human skeleton found at New Orleans, and this he does on the flimsy plea of mere hypotheses, without a shred of argument in their support.

183. Chronometers (or geological grounds for computing time, based on supposed discoveries of human fossil remains). The authorities which we have cited might dispense us from speaking further of the various *chronometers* concerning which so much rumor was raised, and which, it was said, would prove most evidently the great antiquity of mankind.

It was thought that proofs of this great antiquity were found in the fossil human bones discovered in caverns, together with bones of animals now extinct; in chipped flints which were supposed to have served as weapons and utensils for our ancestors; in the formation of river deltas, especially those of the Nile and the Mississippi; in turf pits; in the alluvial formation of valleys and plains; in the dunes of Denmark and Norway; in the lacustrine villages of Switzerland; in the stalactites and stalagmites, and even in the remains of kitchen middens or refuse attributed to the Scandinavians. Let us examine a few of these chronometrical data and we will thereby get an idea of the precautions required in investigations of this kind in order that conclusions, at least *probable*, may be reached.

1. That it might be possible to draw, for instance, *from*

fossil human bones a logical conclusion, it would be necessary that certainty should exist as to the following points: First, that the fossils should have been discovered in deposits older than those of the quaternary period: but it is not always easy to distinguish the upper tertiary layers from the lower quaternary. Second, that these fossils be found in new virgin soils undisturbed by man or by any convulsion or cataclysm of nature. Third, that their origin should not have been altered, by falsifications, or dishonest manipulations, in the records of the museums where such fossils are preserved, or by partisan interpretation. How can all this be established with any degree of certainty? Moreover, it is well to repeat it, we have no certain measure or standard of time to determine with sufficient precision the duration of these geological formations so as to enable us to decide by how many years each of them may be older than that which follows it.

2. The same remarks apply to flints; some simply chipped, others polished or wrought out in divers fashions, which are found in great quantities in these deposits and which might have served as weapons or as domestic utensils in use among our ancestors. Here we should be equally certain that the objects found were really a product of human labor and skill; that the bed in which they were found was free from any interference on the part of man and undisturbed by the violence of natural forces; it would be further necessary to determine with certainty the age of the deposit itself. Let us hear what is said on this point by a competent man, Mr. Dumoulins ("La Question diluviale et le silex ouvré," The Diluvian Question and Wrought Flint): "I declare in my name and in that of Mr. Gourges that for the last thirty-five years we have studied these flint instruments, and we have never found them in any strata that had not been disturbed by the hand of man." As to cut pieces of flints, in particular, it is known that very often these flints, which seem to be the products of human labor, owe the shape in which they appear to the effect of lightning, solar heat, sudden change of temperature, or to extraordinary pressure. At the Congress of Lisbon (1880) Virchow, who presided, expressed his opinion in these terms:

"For the last ten years I have been putting to myself the following question: Can we ascertain from the form of a chipped flint whether the operation which produced it was intentional and therefore due to human agency? This question is sufficient to furnish matter for discussion to many Congresses. . . . Here we do not agree, and many deny. . . . I shall submit to our next Congress specimens possessing all the characteristics required and which have been collected in such localities and under such conditions that man could not have had anything to do with them."

3. Lacustral Villages, or Lake Dwellings, of a people of a supposed prehistoric race that inhabited different parts of Europe, especially Switzerland. These houses were built on piles in lakes a short distance from the shore. Remnants of such comparatively ancient habitations have been lately discovered in great number, and particularly in the Swiss lakes.

In the winter of 1853-4, owing to an unusually dry season, the lakes of Switzerland fell greatly below their usual level; at Meilen, on the Lake of Zurich, the inhabitants undertook to reclaim from the water a tract of ground, which they proceeded to secure by dykes and embankments. It was in the execution of this work that they found in the mud of the lakes a number of piles, besides fragments of pottery and implements of stone, bone, bronze and iron, such as stone axes, arrow heads, stone hammers, flint-flakes, etc. Since that time several hundred of these pile habitations have been discovered, the remains of Lacustral Villages which formerly existed over the water. The Lake Dwellings are chiefly found in the lakes of Zurich, Constance, Geneva, Bienne, Morat and Neufchâtel.

When these discoveries were first announced, it was hoped that the study of the instruments, tools and utensils made of stone, or of bone and iron, and other articles of furniture found in those places and used by those old inhabitants, and also the shape of their skulls, might enable modern scientists to arrive at some legitimate conclusions regarding the assumed extreme antiquity of such dwellers. Some scientists

claimed rather prematurely, as we shall soon see, that they bore unmistakable marks of prehistoric times.

But these hopes have not been realized. The most ancient skulls belonging to the race of Lake-Dwellers are exactly similar to those of the Swiss of the present time; the plants and animals, as known by their fossil remains, are the same as those of to-day. Indeed eminent geologists are of opinion that those villages are relatively recent. Hochstetter considers it quite likely that the beginnings of Lacustral Villages do not go back more than ten centuries before the Christian era. Franz Maurer brings them nearer to us, and Hastler places the most recent ones in the third century before Christ. As to the bed of gravel, which covers them, Wagner declares that it might have been made in as many minutes as Morlot requires centuries.

Conclusion. Science, then, in spite of all its efforts, is far from affording sure and reliable information as to the antiquity of the human race. On the other hand, Biblical chronology leaves us in uncertainty. Hence, we see no possibility of contradiction between the sacred text and natural sciences.

The reader is now prepared to appreciate the following reflections of a very conscientious writer, Mr. James C. Southall, in his valuable work entitled "The Recent Origin of Man." "A scientific fact," he says, "is as much a part of the truth as a verse of Scripture, and every rightly constituted mind must welcome the discoveries of scientific men, as the biblical student would welcome a corrected text of the Books of Chronicles (Paralipomenon). It is not science, but scientific theories hastily formed and inconsiderately promulgated that I venture to rebuke. *Speculation,* it appears to me, is hardly within the sphere of science; and when the theologian or the scientist undertakes to go one step beyond the record, in the one case, and in the other we have the right to call him *back.*" (Preface, p. 9.) And on pages 84-85, alluding to our present subject, he writes: "The reader will appreciate, from the examples adduced (others will be mentioned hereafter) that science is addicted to an incon-

siderate haste in the promulgation of new theories, and that, in particular, she has blundered repeatedly on the subject of the antiquity of man. Her anxiety to confound the theologians permits her to indulge in premature convictions of the inaccuracy of the Mosaic chronology; but the evidence breaks down on the cross-examination.'' As asserted by M. Pouchand in his work ''La Bible et la Science Moderne'' (The Bible and Modern Science): ''Think of it, eighty theories, all more or less hostile to Christianity, developed in the course of forty or fifty years, were brought before the Institute of France in 1806, and *not one* of them survives to this day.'' This is an astonishing fact, and one feels almost impatient that these evanescent forms should assume such airs of authority and of superiority to other methods of knowledge. It appears that Christianity and Science have *already* measured swords, and that Science has been as unfortunate as philosophy and criticism. ''It seems,'' continues the same author, p. 63, ''to give many scientific men particular pleasure to strike a covert blow at Christianity in decorous and fair-spoken words. It is believed by many of them that a demonstration of the 'antiquity of man' will overturn the whole Biblical structure. The spirit of the prevailing Science of the present time is remarkable in one particular: its proclivity to theorize on a limited number of facts. Avowedly inadequate unless future discoveries shall supply what has never yet been procured, Mr. Darwin erects his immense edifice of 'natural selection'; and the surprising part of the matter is that the scientific world seems to cry out, That is exactly the thing! The explanation of such a loose and wild speculation, receiving so much favor, is due to the fact, we think, that a large proportion of our scientists are determined to ignore the supernatural altogether, and to escape a creative act, they are compelled to require Matter to manipulate itself. We thus have 'spontaneous generation' by Mr. Bastian; protoplasm by Mr. Huxley; evolution by Mr. Spencer; and natural selection by Mr. Darwin. The question still remains, even in a case of spontaneous generation, Where did the original dead matter, which generates, come from? But this is disposed of by say-

ing, We deal only with facts; we never speculate. Does not Mr. Darwin 'speculate'? It is the most extensive speculation of any age—not excepting the Hindoo cosmogonists. Does not Mr. Huxley speculate when he contends that a living, intelligent being is nothing but a chemical mixture of so many parts of three or four gases? 'It rejects inquiries into first causes as unphilosophical, and deals only with phenomena'; so speaks the votary of Buddha. And so speaks the modern man of 'Science' when you press him with the main question in this inquiry. 'He rejects inquiries into *first* causes.' As many secondary causes as you choose; that is all 'philosophical'; that is 'Science'; beyond that we get out of the pale of Science, and are classed with the old women and the priests. We look up into the blue vault of heaven, and see it filled with systems and worlds, moving in intricate and harmonious orbits; we see the glory of the sun by day, the peerless rule of the moon by night; we see the earth with its waving forests and verdant meadows; we see highly-organized animals, like the lion, the tiger, and the leopard; beautiful and musical birds; we see human society, and its cities and towns, its laws, its government, its schools, its religions; and we are told by scientific men that it is 'unscientific' to ask whether all these are more than self-perpetuating and self-originated phenomena. We must ask no questions back of what we *see*. That would be theological or metaphysical.''

184. (*b*) History. It is known that all nations, in particular the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Hindoos and the Chinese, have been vain enough to attribute to themselves an antiquity lost in the night of time. Already in his day Cicero had remarked this propensity. Let us see if history ratifies these claims.

1. *Egypt.* From the accounts of *Greek* travelers, who visited Egypt in the early times, we obtain some knowledge of the chronology of that country. But the data given by Solon, Herodotus, Varro and Diodorus of Sicily are so vague, and especially, so contradictory, that the figures we meet with can constitute no trustworthy authority. In this there is nothing surprising. These writers, being ignorant of the

language of Egypt, could not draw directly from the sources. It is also probable that they misunderstood the information they received through interpreters; and then, what guarantee of exactness concerning early chronology is afforded by the persons from whom they received their information?

As to Manetho, who lived in Egypt about the year 300 before Christ, we must first of all observe that his history, written in Greek, no longer exists; what remains consists only of fragments preserved by Josephus, the Jewish historian, and a chronological summary preserved by Eusebius of Cæsarea, surnamed the Father of Ecclesiastical History. Moreover, the extreme insignificance of the facts, which he relates, shows that he was but slightly informed concerning the early times of Egypt. Besides, whilst monuments attest that many kings reigned together at the same time, Manetho enumerates all the dynasties as if they had been successive. Finally, in thirty-seven cases, where we can verify the figures of this historian by those of the Papyrus preserved in the Egyptian museum of Turin, Italy, which gives a list of the kings of Egypt, we find that in twenty-two instances he lengthens the duration of reigns, and in six instances shortens it.

We come now to the third source of information. This is the lists which contain the names of the kings of Egypt, and in particular, the lists of the Papyrus of Turin, unfortunately incomplete, and then the tables of Abydos, of Saqqarah and of Karnak. We have also the hieroglyphic inscriptions, relating, on the walls of the temples, the exploits of the Egyptian monarchs; then inscriptions upon the steles or small monoliths, recording the deeds of court officers and other personages, and those of Apis, and, finally, figured monuments of all kinds.

In all these we find nothing complete. And, moreover, as Fr. Lenormant says: "The greatest obstacle to the formation of a regular Egyptian chronology is that the Egyptians themselves never had any chronology." How could they have a chronological system when they had no *era*, or fixed date to count from? Hence, Mariette asserts that modern Science

must always fail in its attempts to reconstruct what the Egyptians themselves did not have. Brugsch is of the same opinion: "In the present state of things," says he, "no living man is able to dispel the difficulties, which prevent the reconstruction of the original list of kings contained in the fragments of the Turin Papyrus." The reason is that Egyptians contented themselves with mentioning the length of each reign, without distinguishing if the sovereign had reigned *at the same time* as another sovereign; they represented as consecutive dynasties which were contemporaneous.

The historical documents and the existing monuments of Egypt, therefore, cannot supply an assured chronology, nor can they show that the chronology of the Septuagint is too short. This is the rational conclusion, which Vigouroux draws from the details set forth in chapter four of the third volume of his work. "Learned men," he adds, "who claim that a longer term is required, give only their personal opinion, but nothing obliges us to accept it."

Do we desire a striking proof of the truth of these assertions? We find it in the very disagreement, which exists among the different modern historians, who have written about the history of Egypt. Whilst Bockh places the accession of Menes, the first humane king, at the year 5702 before our era, Mariette and Fr. Lenormant place it at the year 5004, Brugsch at 4455, Bunsen at 3623 or 3059, Wilkinson at 2691. "It is," George Rawlinson remarks with much reason, "as if the best authorities on Roman history were to tell us, some that the republic was founded in 508, others in 3508 before Christ."

We shall close what we have to say concerning the antiquity of the Egyptians by an observation of Vigouroux: "We must acknowledge that Egypt existed before Menes, and that it is considerably more ancient. As far back as we can go in the past, we find it in full civilization, in the possession of its arts, its monumental writing, its religion. . . . But here, as in questions of paleontology and historical archæology, we are without chronometric data; we cannot determine the chronology accurately; we have simply to repeat

that Genesis, properly understood, gives to Egyptologists every latitude in conceding to Egypt the antiquity, which a careful study of its monuments demands."

2. *India.* "The Hindoos," says Krusse, "possess no work of history. They have wrapped up ancient events in a poetic garment of myths, without any indication of time." Duncker assures us that we cannot, with any certainty, go farther back than to about the year 800 before the Christian era. In the country itself there has been found no historical monument having a date anterior to the third century before Christ. "The fragments which remain of the annals of the peoples of India," says Xavier Raymond, "are so mingled with fables and disfigured by the most extravagant chronology, that it is impossible for even the most patient investigator to find a thread to guide himself in this bewildering labyrinth. We do not find in the history of that country any certain date before the invasion of Alexander." (327-325 B.C.)

If Sanscrit literature allows us to go further back than history properly so-called, it does not, however, supply reliable details as to the antiquity of man. According to Max Müller, the oldest Vedic hymns do not go back farther than the year 1200 before Christ. Hence, Barthélemi Saint-Hilaire concludes: "Notwithstanding all the efforts of our erudition, powerful and sure as it is, we must despair of ever reviving the past records of that nation, lost by the very men who were the principal actors in it. India has had no desire to arise from its dreams. We cannot historically evoke it from its tomb." "It is, as it were, by an act of faith," says Eugene Burnouf, "that we believe the literature of India to be old, for among so many literary works we have not as yet met with any historical books."

3. *China.* Notwithstanding the earnest labors undertaken to clear up the chronology of China, not only in our times but in the XVII and XVIII centuries, there has been no better success with China than with India. We should not be surprised at this. The inhabitants of the Celestial Empire had not in the past any era properly so called; in other words, they did not possess any fixed standard for reckoning time.

Then, in remote epochs, they preserved no historical documents; later, that is about the year 213 B.C., Chi-hoang-ti, founder of the T'sin dynasty, ordered, under pain of death, the destruction of all the historical books of the empire. We may add that ancient monuments, which might have aided us in ascertaining dates, are altogether wanting. Those that are brought forward do not stand critical examination. Balfour is perfectly right in saying: "The primitive history of the Celestial Kingdom is a sealed book." What we do know of it does not require us to go further back than the time allowed by the chronology of the Septuagint.

4. There remains Chaldæa, whose chronology is better known to us, thanks to ancient *monuments* discovered in recent times. It is not *the historical books* of that country which can enlighten us on the subject; the fragments of Berosius, a priest of Bel at Babylon, relating to Chaldæan antiquity, were considered as fabulous by the Greeks themselves, as far as chronology was concerned. It is altogether different as to the cuneiform inscriptions: they give us, for Chaldæa and Babylon, more precise figures from the era of Nabonassar, 747 B.C. If these figures are true, the chronology taken from the Septuagint is insufficient and we must admit omissions in the figures of the Bible. (See n. 181.) Will it ever be possible to verify the real import of the figures given by those inscriptions? We may hope so, thanks especially to the recent discoveries due to the scientific expedition organized by the University of Philadelphia. Its mission was to explore as thoroughly as possible, the ruins which are seen to the southeast of Babylon, at Nifer, or Nuffar, the site of ancient Nippur, celebrated of old for its famous temple of Bel. In three successive explorations, from 1888 to 1896, the men of science forming the American expedition have exhumed over thirty thousand inscribed tablets, many of which belong to the epoch of the first dynasty of Ur (about 2800 B.C.) and to the Kassite period (about 1715 to 1140 B.C.), that is to say, for a time for which there were not up to this any monuments bearing dates. To estimate the full importance of these discoveries we must wait for the publication an-

nounced by M. Hilprecht, professor at the University of Philadelphia. We shall only say that the American archæologists are quite inclined to allow an age of fifty to sixty centuries to the storied temple which they exhumed at Nifier, and also to some of the monuments or writing or of art which they found during their excavations. Moreover, it seems to result from the inscriptions deciphered up to this and from previous labors, that there existed about the year 3800 B.C., a powerful "King of Agade," bearing the name of Sargon, or more exactly, Sargina, who carried his victorious arms as far as the Mediterranean. Let us hope that the University of Philadelphia will complete the work so nobly begun. It will have the honor of having discovered the principal sanctuary of an ancient civilization and having made known to the world the details of its construction and interior arrangements, at the same time as its history, which has been prolonged through the centuries.

Here we quote again a passage from the excellent work of Mr. James C. Southall—"The Recent Origin of Man":

"The First Glimpses of the Human Race. If we trace back the thread of human history, we have Modern Europe; the Middle Ages; the Goths, Vandals, Huns; Rome. We can follow the Roman history back to seven hundred and fifty years before Christ. And before the Romans were the Greeks. We can trace them back through Demosthenes, Thucydides, Herodotus, Homer. Solon was about 600 B.C.; Lycurgus, a kind of mythical form, about 900 B.C. Back of that we place the Trojan war (about 1200 B.C.), the Lycians, the Lydians, the Carians, etc.; and there, excluding certain confused ideas of Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Etruscan and Phœnician history, our thread was lost—always excepting, of course, the earlier Hebrew chronicles, written about 1500 B.C. But modern research has laid bare the Egyptian and Mesopotamian annals, and we now know more, perhaps, of the daily life of the old Memphian and Theban monarchies than we do of that of the Romans before the Punic wars." Champollion and Young, followed by Layard, Rawlinson, Oppert, Brugsch, De Rougé, Lepsius, Mariette, have found the key to the mysterious char-

acters that were stamped on the Babylonian bricks or traced on the walls of the Egyptian tombs. The long-sealed records of ancient India, of Phœnicia, of Palestine, Persia, Moab, have also been more or less illustrated by archæological inquiry. We find ourselves face to face with the builders of the Pyramids and the Tower of Babel, with the hoary antiquity of the Vedas, and those primeval rovers of the sea whose traces, it is supposed, have been found even in America. We can almost lay our hands upon Mizraim and Asshur and Nimrod, as they stand between the Ark and the opening drama of human history. Authorities differ as to the precise chronology; but 2700 B.C. for Egypt, and the same date for Babylon, is, perhaps, not far from the mark. A few hundred years earlier or later will not affect the main fact; *that human history commences about four thousand five hundred or five thousand years ago.* The Chinese and the Hindoos (like the Egyptians and the Babylonians) *claim* a much greater antiquity; but by general consent it is now allowed that the Egyptian annals go back as far as any others, if not farther. There is, however, no very great difference between the antiquity of the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Arabians, the Assyrians, the Persians, the Scythians (Turyas), the Phœnicians, the Chinese and the Indians. They all go back some two thousand or three thousand years before the Christian era. With regard to China, in the seventh century before the Christian era it embraced only five of the present eighteen districts; and there are no historical documents earlier than the sixth century B.C. No writings of any description, prior to those ascribed to Confucius, exist in China. This philosopher compiled a history of China in a book called the *Shoo-king.* Subsequent to this, one of the Chinese emperors, Che-wang-tse by name, under the idea of commencing a new set of annals with his own reign, caused all the records of the empire to be destroyed. Sixty years afterwards, his successor attempted to repair the mischief which had been perpetrated, and offered large rewards for the recovery of any of the lost annals. The Shoo-king is said to have been recovered from an old man who had committed it to memory. Such

is Chinese history prior to this date. But, such as it is, it does not claim to go back farther than 2637 B.C.

With regard to India, the annals of this country do not go back farther than the epoch of Alexander the Great. The Rig-veda, for which an antiquity of three thousand years before our era is claimed, belongs probably to the twelfth century B.C., while the laws of Menu are five hundred years later. The rock-cut temples of India have also been deemed of immense antiquity; but it is now ascertained from inscriptions and other data, that none of them are older than the second century B.C. The natives will tell you that they were erected by the Pandus 3101 B.C., while others tell us they belong to "an ante-Sanskrit race."

The epoch of Sargon precedes by at least eight or ten centuries the oldest date that can be assigned to the deluge according to the figures either of the Vulgate and Hebrew text or of the Septuagint, if we admit no omissions in the biblical genealogies. We cannot, however, admit that this prince lived before the deluge. ("Etudes," 1897, p. 835.)

Conclusion. "The history of India, as well as that of China in its authentic parts," concludes Vigouroux, "can be safely set down as being restricted within the range of centuries admitted by the Greek and Latin Fathers. As to Egypt, the high antiquity attributed to it by the Egyptian historian Manetho (300 B.C.), is far from being proven, and many reasons incline us to the lower date assigned to its existence at that remote age. It can be said, it is true, that the progress of civilization, which already flourished in Egypt and Chaldæa in the time of their most ancient kings, whose names are known to us, as well as geological and paleontological discoveries, requires a longer period than that given by the chronology of the Septuagint; but here all calculations become impossible, and we can only say to men of Science: establish by sound proofs the antiquity of man and of the ancient peoples of the earth, the Bible will not offer any contradiction to your conclusions."

(See Card. Mazzella, "De Deo Creante," p. 388; Rawlinson, "The Ancient Monarchies"; Thein, "The Bible and

Rationalism," 1st and 4th vol.; Veith, "Scriptura contra incredulos vindicata"; De Concilio, "Harmony between Science and Revelation," p. 180; Moigno, "Les Splendeurs de la Foi," vol. 2, ch. 8, p. 604; Thein, "Christian Anthropology," ch. x, p. 330; Schanz, "Christian Apology," ch. xviii, p. 412).

CHAPTER III

THE BIBLE AND MODERN DISCOVERIES IN EGYPT AND ASSYRIA

185. We cannot close these notes concerning the relations between the Bible and Science, without speaking of the unexpected testimony brought in support of the truth of the Sacred Scriptures by the numerous discoveries made in recent times in Egypt, Chaldæa and Assyria. The Hebrews, the Chaldæans and the Assyrians have a common origin; they have long dwelt upon the same soil, lived the same life, followed the same customs. After their early separation they again came into immediate contact when the Hebrews were carried into captivity by Nabuchodonosor. As to Egypt, no one is ignorant of the sojourn during several centuries (430 years) of the Jewish people in that country. It was, therefore impossible to exhume or disinter, so to speak, these people from their graves without causing their past records to pour forth a flood of light upon the facts contained in the Sacred Scriptures. This is exactly what has occurred. And, what seems to be truly providential, it was precisely at the time that rationalism was forging new weapons with which it hoped to undermine the divine work, that God brought back to life, as it were, the Chaldæans and the Egyptians to bear witness to the veracity of Moses and the other sacred writers.

186. 1. Discoveries in Egypt. At the time of his expedition into Egypt, Napoleon I brought with him a galaxy of learned men for the purpose of collecting anything that might contribute to the progress of Science, and thus contribute to the prestige of his reign. Most valuable discoveries were made, and these discoveries have since then become innumer-

able from the day that the indefatigable Champollion succeeded in deciphering the hieroglyphic writings by discovering the formerly mysterious alphabet of that ancient language. It is of great importance to give an idea of the services these writings have rendered to our Sacred Scriptures.

The history of Abraham and Joseph contains a multitude of details about habits, morals, usages, customs, geography, etc., of those days. If we believe German rationalists, eagerly translated or copied by French freethinkers, the narratives were full of inaccuracies or glaring errors, showing that the writer was unacquainted with the country described by him, and especially exhibiting him as utterly deprived of divine inspiration.

In the first place, the favorable reception which Abraham met with in the court of Pharaoh seemed altogether improbable in their eyes. They also claimed that the sheep, the asses and especially the camels, which are said to have been offered to the patriarch by the King of Egypt, never had been acclimatized in that country; that horses, on the contrary, which are not enumerated among the presents of Pharaoh, were numerous. The same objections are made as to the history of Joseph; according to these men, the fact of the cup being presented to the King by the cup-bearer was nonsense; wine was almost unknown in Egypt; the ceremony of investiture, the objects of luxury, collars, engraved stones, with which it was said the son of Jacob had been adorned when elevated to the dignity of viceroy of Egypt, were, they claim, utterly unknown at the time, and so forth.

Behold, at the very moment that this general assault was being made upon the Bible, modern discoveries of Egyptologists give a direct lie to these arrogant pretensions of an impious Science, and overthrow all the scientific scaffolding it had so laboriously erected. The numerous paintings found in the underground buildings or Hypogea of Beni-Hassan, contemporaneous with Abraham, represent scenes of the reception of strangers, recalling each feature of the visit of Abraham to Pharaoh. Like the members of the patriarch's family, those strangers, according to the inscriptions, are

amu, that is to say, nomad-shepherds of Arabia and Palestine; their leader's name, Abschap (father of the sand), is not without analogy with that of Abraham (father of the multitude), to whom as a reward of his heroic obedience, God had made the magnificent promise recorded in Genesis 22, 16, 17: *"Said the Lord; because thou hast not spared thy only begotten son for my sake, I will bless thee, and I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand that is by the sea shore."*

The physiognomies and the modes or habits of life are purely Semitic. Though the shepherds (Sina) offer presents as a sign of submission and respect, they are treated as persons of distinction; their reception is made with all the parade of the Egyptian ceremonial used on such occasions. And finally, even as to the very motive of the visit, everything seems to be identical: it is famine, says the hieroglyphic inscription, that brings these strangers to the land of Misraiin, the very reason that brought Jacob's sons to Egypt (Genesis, 42, 2.)

The sculptures and paintings of Thebes, explained by authentic texts, of most precise character, show us asses, sheep and cattle, as forming the greater portion of the riches of kings and princes; some monuments represent also camels; *horses,* on the contrary, do not figure among these animals, and the inscriptions inform us that they were only acclimatized under the pastoral kings, the last of whom made Joseph his prime minister. It is, therefore, quite natural that they should not be mentioned under the twelfth dynasty, at which time Abraham went into Egypt.

As to the history of Joseph, the indirect proofs of its authenticity are no less numerous and conclusive. Wine was perfectly well known to the Egyptians. The artists of Thebes represent the ancient inhabitants of the Nile cultivating *the vine,* making *good and evil use* of its product and receiving at repasts the *cup* from the hands of the first *cupbearer.*

Many centuries before the coming of Joseph, the Egyptians were held as the best *jewelers* and *engravers* in the world. It is by the hundreds that we count the *jewels* and

engraved precious stones, masterpieces of art from every point of view, made by Egyptians more than three thousand years ago. All the museums of Europe possess numerous and magnificent specimens. The description given by Moses of the ceremony accompanying Joseph's elevation to the dignity of prime minister, the investing him with the linen robe, the collar and the ring, the official title given him by the king and his station on the second chariot in the royal train, all this is literally reproduced and represented by the numerous sculptures and paintings depicting the history of those identical times.

We have a like confirmation as to the dreams of the cupbearer and of the chief baker, the interview of the sons of Jacob with Joseph, the particular ceremonial followed during the feast which was served to them. But without entering into particulars, which we could multiply indefinitely, all of which proves the accuracy of Moses, even as to the slightest details, we shall mention only one discovery, made quite recently, which refers to the last years of the sojourn of the Hebrews in Egypt and which furnishes to biblical exegesis a testimony as precious as it was unexpected.

Rameses II, the Sesostris of the Greeks, whose perfectly preserved mummy has been recently discovered, had determined to persecute the Hebrews. To satisfy his hatred and his mania for building, he compelled the sons of Israel to erect two cities in the land of Gessen, called the cities of Rameses and Pithom. The Bible describes, in vivid language, the trials of the Israelites under the lash of their Egyptian taskmaster; they were piteously compelled to make bricks and dry them in the sun. Now, the paintings of the eighteenth dynasty confirm, in all points, the exactness of this account; we find even the method of making the bricks, as described in the Bible, mentioned in the papyrus containing the reports of the taskmasters.

But the site of the two cities built by the Hebrews remained unknown; the texts only gave a vague description of the city of Rameses; and Pithom was not mentioned in any monument hitherto discovered. But now, behold! this very

city, hitherto buried in oblivion, emerges from out of the sands, which have so long covered and hidden it from human gaze. In the month of February, 1883, Mr. Naville discovered, near Maskhuta, to the east of the Delta, an immense block of granite, representing a Pharaoh, seated between the god Ra and the god Tum. This Pharaoh was no other than Rameses II, whose name appears not less than six times in the inscription on the monument. The ruins, among which the Swiss Egyptologist found this sculpture, consisted of a mass of bricks dried in the sun and stamped with the inscription, Rameses II. The same ruins were surrounded by a wall, also of brick, and enclosing in their circuit several acres of land. Other sculptures were soon brought to light. They all bore, with the biblical name of Pithom, the very name of the persecuting Pharaoh. No fragment anterior to this reign is found.

This important discovery, whilst confirming the truth of the text of Moses, enabled investigators to determine very closely the boundaries of the land of Gessen, and to trace, with more precision, the route followed by the Israelites after their exodus or departure from Egypt.

This accuracy, in reproducing such local features as exactly correspond to the biblical narrative, has become so manifest that men of science, even the most hostile, baffled on all sides by the new discoveries, are compelled to acknowledge their discomfiture. Thus, when in 1868, Mr. Ebers, the most illustrious Egyptologist of Germany, published, in spite of the protests of his friends, rationalists like himself, his first volume, treating of Egypt and the books of Moses, the evidence of facts drew from him this significant avowal: "It is with much reluctance that I publish this laborious work. I hope, undoubtedly, to secure thereby the good will of a certain number of the friends of the Bible; but on the other hand, I cannot refrain from thinking that I shall meet with bitter criticism at the hands of its opponents. Against my will under one point of view, and yet voluntarily under another, to those who would close the Sacred Scripture to the investigations of free criticism (?) I will offer, as the result of my studies, many things that may prove agreeable to them, for I

prove that the history of Joseph in particular, even in the minutest details, depicts exactly the state, manners and conditions of ancient Egypt."

In connection with the Napoleonic expedition into Egypt, referred to above, we deem it appropriate to relate here an incident revealing the ignominious defeat encountered by infidel science, when it attempted to discredit the biblical period concerning the age of man.

"A great sensation was produced by the discovery of the Zodiacs of Dendera and Esne in Egypt, which, it was believed, settled definitely the question of the antiquity of man. These Zodiacs were discovered during the expedition of Napoleon to Egypt, referred to above, n. 186, and were found on the ceilings of two temples in the cities named. They were engraved in wood and painted. The Zodiac at Dendera is headed by the sign of the Lion, followed by the Virgin, the Balance, the Scorpion, the Archer, and the Capricorn in the same line. The peculiar arrangement of these figures represented, it was said, the exact position of the constellations when the Zodiac was constructed, and it was ascertained, by what they styled appropriate calculations, that it was much older than the beginning of the period embraced in the biblical chronology. M. Dupuis calculated that these temples must have been at least fifteen thousand years old. "Science," says M. Greppo (Essay on the Hieroglyphic System, 1829), "struck out into systems very bold; and the spirit of infidelity, seizing upon the discovery, flattered itself with the hope of drawing from it new support."

In the midst of the apparent triumph of Science, a circumstance occurred which added a new excitement to the subject. This was the arrival of the planisphere of Dendera at Paris, in 1821, M. Leloraine, an enterprising young traveler, having succeeded in detaching it from the ceiling of the temple and transporting it safely to France.

M. Greppo describes the interest which it awakened: "An object of interest to educated men, and of vanity to those who thought themselves such, it could not remain unnoticed by the multitude; and classes of society, who knew not even

the signification of the term Zodiac, rushed in crowds to behold it. In the journals, in the saloons, the Zodiac was the only topic of discussion. Have you seen the Zodiac? What do you think of the Zodiac? were questions to which every one was seemingly compelled to give a well-informed answer, or to be degraded from a place in polished society."

Tracts were circulated in Paris to disseminate the fact that the biblical chronology was set aside.

At this moment Champollion, the younger, arrived in Paris from a visit to Egypt. He had just previously assisted in solving the secret of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, and, having examined the Zodiac of Dendera before its removal, had there deciphered in Greek letters the word for *Emperor;* while on the walls of the temple he discovered the names, titles and surnames of *Tiberius, Claudius Nero* and *Domitian.*

Upon the portico of Esne, which the *Edinburgh Review* had pronounced "much more ancient," he read the names of *Claudius* and *Antonius Pius:* it was really *more modern.*

The truth about the Zodiacs was that they belonged to the first and second centuries of the Christian era, and that they were "*themes of nativity,*" and had reference to *judicial astrology.* (Southall, The Recent Origin of Man, p. 76.)

187. 2. Discoveries in Assyria and Chaldæa. Notwithstanding the great and manifold arguments furnished by the monuments of ancient Egypt, for the vindication of the Sacred Scriptures, Egyptological discoveries have not fully realized the expectations that were entertained at the beginning. The deciphering of those ancient monuments furnished only an *indirect* confirmation of the truth of the inspired books of Holy Writ. Quite different have been the results of *Assyrian* archæology. Here direct proofs are abundant. The texts and the sculptures found in the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon not only confirm the inspired narratives of the Bible, but in many instances they clear them up and even supply omissions.

When Science was finding the key to hieroglyphic writing, it succeeded almost at the same time in learning how to read the *cuneiform* writing, so called because the triangular stylus,

with which the letters or characters were formed, had the appearance of a wedge. The monuments of Assyria were covered all over with this writing. Assyrian monarchs were in the habit of engraving the account of their achievements on columns, or cylinders, which they buried in the foundations of great buildings, on the marble which decorated the great halls of temples and palaces, behind the bas-reliefs ornamenting their porticoes. The most abundant source of these valuable records was found in the libraries, discovered in great numbers in Chaldæa, Assyria, and particularly at Nineveh and its neighborhood. A few leagues to the north of this city, were found inscriptions on the palace of Sennacherib, covering a space of more than six thousand metres. The library of Assurbanipal contains about ten thousand cuneiform tablets, that is to say, almost a complete treasury of the literature of that day: theology, astronomy or astrology, political history, natural history, geography, grammar, are all represented. The books composing this library consist of clay tablets, flat and square in form, covered on both sides by fine and close writing, wedgelike in shape, and then baked to harden them. Some of those books were composed of more than a hundred of these tablets, placed in order and regularly ticketed and numbered. It is true that the library of Assurbanipal has been seriously damaged by the burning of the palace, and in later times by the inclemency of the seasons and the rapacity of the Arabs; but what remains is very considerable and forms one of the principal treasures of the British Museum. It is to Mr. Lazard (1850) and Mr. George Smith (1873 to 1875) that we owe the discovery of these treasures.

At the beginning of April, 1882, Mr. Hormuzd Rassam enriched the British Museum with five thousand new tablets, found by him at Abou-Habba, the Sipharnaim of the Bible. In its turn, in 1881, the museum of the Louvre in Paris, acquired a considerable collection of cuneiform inscriptions. At the same time, M. de Sarzec, French Consul at Bassorah, discovered, at four days' march from that place, ruins covering a space from six to seven kilometres, and containing a great number of cylinders and tablets.

Let me now point out some of the remarkable results of the Chaldæo-Assyrian discoveries from the point of view of biblical interpretation.

The Assyrian bas-reliefs often depict the tree of life. An antique Babylonian cylinder seems really to represent the temptation of Adam and Eve, the serpent seen behind the woman stands erect and does not crawl. On the fragments of a cuneiform tablet, anterior to Moses, discovered by G. Smith, are found related all the principal facts of the deluge: the corruption of mankind, the divine command to build the Ark, the judgment of God against sinners, the dimensions of the Ark, the smearing of the Ark with pitch, the command to preserve the living animals, the going into the Ark, the description of the deluge, the end of the deluge, the opening of the window, the sending forth of the birds, the offering of the sacrifice, God blessing man and His alliance with him. Another account of the same fact has been discovered by Mr. Hormuzd Rassam. This one is not of Assyrian, as the former, but of Chaldæan origin; it is, however, perfectly similar to it, and fills up several incidents omitted in the other.

Eight and a half miles from Hillah, a city built upon the site of ancient Babylon, there have been found irregular ruins 170 metres in circumference and 40 metres in height. They are composed of bricks, partly vitrified by fire. This is ancient Borsippa, now called Birs Nimrud. The labors of Mr. Oppert do not leave any doubt but that they are the ruins of the Tower of Babel. On the other hand, the inscriptions of Sargon indicate the materials employed in this work: bricks baked in the fire, and bitumen used as mortar. Now this is precisely what the Bible states. Here are its words: "*When the people removed from the East, they found a plain in the land of Sennaar and dwelt in it, and each one said to his neighbour: come, let us make bricks and bake them with fire. And they had bricks instead of stone, and slime instead of mortar.*" (Gen. 11, 3.)

The Babylonian traditions concerning the Tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues resemble, in a striking manner, the biblical tradition. From this some modern rationalists

consider themselves authorized to say "that the legend is not very ancient." But, in his inscriptions, Nabuchodonosor, who rebuilt the monuments, speaks of the first tower as dating back to very *distant days.*

On examining, under the light of Assyrian discoveries, the books of the Old Testament, where the people of God appear in their relations with the kings of Nineveh and Babylon, we find many other irrefutable testimonies in favor of biblical truth; but we must content ourselves with giving only a few samples in point.

The opponents of the Bible question the truth of the narrative relative to the captivity at Babylon of Manasses, King of Judea, spoken of in the book of Paralipomenon (2 Par. 33, 11) and the historical reality of Sargon, king of Assyria, mentioned by Isaias. Thanks to recent discoveries of Assyriologists, such doubts are no longer possible. As to Sargon, for instance, they have found inscriptions numerous enough to be called *The Acts of Sargon.* Besides, we can to-day see at the Louvre Museum in Paris the very image of this great king. "The book of Daniel," says the Assyriologist Ménant, "contains facts of Chaldæan civilization, at the time of Nabuchodonosor, related with an exactness which no apocryphal imitation could attain." It was also claimed that the book of Esther had been written in the year 160 after the victory of Judas Maccabæus by a writer who, as they contended, knew nothing of Persia. And behold! the excavations undertaken in the old city of Susa, by M. Dieulafoy, completely destroy these mendacious assertions. In a lecture given by him in 1888, and reported by Mr. Darmesteter in the *Journal Asiatique,* he showed that "The objections piled up by rationalistic exegesis against the authenticity of this book rest for the greater part on an imperfect idea of Persian life. The details, which were rejected as altogether improbable and opposed to common sense, prove, on the contrary, that the author of Esther's narrative knew thoroughly well the customs of the court of Susa." It suffices to examine the plan of the royal palace, as reconstructed according to the excavations effected by M. Dieulafoy, to see how exact are certain

details concerning that palace given by the author of the book of Esther. The writer must evidently have described *on the spot* this palace, with the competence and accuracy of an eye-witness, as it was destroyed only about the end of the third century before our era.

We should never finish if we were to mention everything which the modern discoveries in Egypt, Assyria, Chaldæa and Palestine have brought forth in confirmation of the absolute truth of the Sacred Books. We would refer the reader to the learned books of the Abbé Vigouroux: "La Bible et les découvertes modernes en Egypte et en Assyrie" (The Bible and Modern Discoveries in Egypt and Assyria); "Manuel biblique" (Biblical Manual); "Les Livres Saints et la critique rationaliste" (The Sacred Books and Rationalistic Criticism). See also "Les Découvertes américaines en Babylonie," dans Les Etudes, de Paris, 20 Mars, 1897 (The American Discoveries in Babylonia, published in *Les Etudes*).

Conclusion of This Chapter

188. We cannot better conclude this part of our work, relating to the authenticity of the Pentateuch, than by citing an eloquent passage from Abbé Darras, "History of the Church," vol. 3 (*Histoire de l'Eglise*):

"Will the numerous discomfitures, which unbelieving exegesis has encountered, render rationalism more cautious in the future? We gladly would it were so; but on looking back and counting one after another all these foes of the Sacred Books, who have come, each in his turn, eager to cast his handful of sand against the immovable rock of the divine Word, we may say that this revolt of the intellect against the known truth will never cease. Hence, in spite of so many fruitless efforts, we have reason to expect that other arms will be raised to strike new blows; in spite of so many defeats, other assailants will hasten to the fray, as of old, and the contest will last until the consummation of time. But the Almighty, who reserved for our day witnesses that the oblivion of three thousand years had buried in silence and obscurity, will raise other champions of truth in the course of ages yet

to come. What rich harvests yet unknown remain to be gathered in the domain of the past! What treasures, now lying buried under the ruins of extinct civilizations, the future will see disinterred from their grave for the triumph of faith and biblical truth!

"And may we not even now proclaim that each of the discoveries, so laboriously achieved in all the branches of human Science, furnishes a most brilliant and unexpected confirmation of the most controverted texts and passages of our Sacred Book? It has been thus since the days of Porphyry unto our own times. Were we to subject even the most perfect work of human genius to a similar crucial test, carried on through so many centuries, and should we deliver it up to the reckless and partial criticism, which the Bible has undergone, where, I ask you, is the single book of a Plato, an Aristotle, a Tacitus, a Bossuet, that would to-day remain intact after such ordeal? And yet the Bible stands triumphantly and immortal! As the hand of the demolisher has dug around the bases of the mighty edifice, to overthrow it, new ramparts and bulwarks were found, that render it proof against all attacks and utterly indestructible.

"Rationalists, you say you do not believe in miracles: for twenty centuries you have been following each other in unceasing efforts to destroy a Book written in the olden time by a few Hebrews, in an obscure Province of Asia. All human passions are your allies in this warfare. Thousands of books have been discredited by a merciless criticism, and yet you have not succeeded in destroying this Book; truly, this *is* a miracle."

CHAPTER IV

HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE GOSPELS

189. Our inspired books would secure unanimous assent if they related, not the life of the Redeemer and the establishment of Christianity, but the deeds of some conqueror, or one of those political revolutions which overthrow whole nations. But these books tell us of the origin of a religion which de-

mands the sacrifice of prejudices, the curbing of rebellious passions, and the constant practice of precepts contrary to the lower instincts and tendencies of human nature. The renowned French thinker, Pascal, said, if the Decalogue, reported by Moses, in Exodus 20, contained ten theorems of mathematics instead of the Ten Commandments, no infidel or rationalist would ever have found fault with it, nor striven to discredit its origin and reject its Author. It is not surprising, therefore, that men should have tried everything to destroy that religion. Now, to destroy Christianity and sap its foundations, it would be sufficient to take away all evidence of historical truth from the documents, which relate the life, miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, its Founder and the Author and Organizer of the Church, that was appointed by Him to carry on the work of man's salvation, even to the end of time. It is, therefore, supremely important to establish solidly the undeniable authority of these historical documents so venerable by the antiquity of their origin and the sublimity of their teachings. It is necessary here to recall to memory what we have said as to *the point of view* from which we consider the Sacred Books in this work, and as to the qualities that an historical document should have in order to possess full and unquestionable authority. (See n. 151.)

§ I. Authenticity of the Gospels

190. The authenticity of the writings of the New Testament, on which all the light of modern biblical criticism has been concentrated, is no longer contested. Rationalists, like Reuss, Holzmann, Schenkel, Réville, Michel Nicolas, admit with us the historical authenticity of our Gospels, and they acknowledge that these books must have been composed during the first century of the Christian era. "We think," says Tischendorf, "that we are fully justified in placing about the end of the first century, not the writing or composing of the Gospels, but their collection into a body recognized as a divinely inspired book." Unbelievers spared no effort in their attempt at robbing the Gospels of their authenticity. They

were, above all, highly concerned in retarding the date of their origin. But, in their attacks, they had to go through so many changes and vicissitudes, as to pull down, by their own hands, the very structure which they had labored so diligently in building up. Hence, to the chimerical impostures of Lessing there succeeded the rationalism of Paulus; then the mythical dream of Strauss was replaced by the Petrinism and Paulinism of Baur and of the School (Protestant) of Tübingen. But the authority of the Gospel has survived all these shifting theories, each one of which was believed by its authors to have destroyed it forever. And in our own days Mr. Harnack has the candor to declare that "in his opinion all competent men must finally admit that the chronological order, according to which tradition has arranged the old monuments and records of Christianity, is quite accurate in all its main lines, and consequently compels the historian to reject as false all hypotheses that have been devised in opposition to that order." As to the Epistles of St. Paul, Renan says that the full light of history is clear and bright as to the precise time of the preaching of this Apostle, and that his preaching began, no doubt, between the fifteenth and the thirty-second year after Christ's Passion. Here are some of his statements: "Several of the Epistles of the Apostle are absolutely authentic." "One undoubted fact is that the Acts are by the same author as the third Gospel (St. Luke), and that they are a continuation of that Gospel. This proposition has never been contested." "The author (St. Luke) is the companion of St. Paul." We shall now give some of the proofs of this authenticity.

THESIS.—The Gospels were written in the first century of the Christian era by the authors whose names they bear, that is to say, by the Apostles or their immediate disciples St. Mark and St. Luke.

191. First Argument—Prescription. Possession is equal to title until proof to the contrary is alleged. But *all Christians,* Catholics and heretics, have always held and still

hold the Gospel as authentic; they are on that point *in peaceable and undisturbed possession.* To dispossess them, it would be necessary to prove the illegitimacy of this possession, to show when and by whom the fraudulent transaction was effected. "We Christians," says de Broglie, "are in the position of a proprietor who knows from whom he holds his possessions, who is sure of the justice of his right; he is not bound to examine into the claims of those who pretend to contest his title, unless such investigation were required as a measure of self-defense." In spite of all their efforts, infidels have been able to oppose to us on this fundamental point only a few objections, whose futility we shall show later on. The authenticity of the Bible remains, therefore, established until our opponents will have proven the contrary. But in this they will never succeed, because the direct proof that we shall bring forward cannot be refuted.

Second Argument. The *positive* testimonies in support of that authenticity are so numerous and so uniform that they defy all serious contradiction. We have on this point: 1. The unanimous agreement of *all Christian authors,* even those of the first century. Already among the Apostolic Fathers, or immediate disciples of the Apostles, we find quotations drawn from all the Gospels. There came down to us from the Apostolic Fathers a certain number of writings of undeniable authenticity: the celebrated letter addressed to the Faithful of Corinth by St. Clement, contemporary of St. Peter, analyzed and commented upon by the late Cardinal Franzelin; *the Epistle wrongly attributed to St. Barnabas,* faithful companion and friend of St. Paul; the book, entitled "The Pastor," by Hermas; the "Seven Letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch"; the "Letter of St. Polycarp" to the Church of Philippi; "The Epistle" to Diognetes; "The Fragments of Papias," inserted in the "Ecclesiastical History" of Eusebius, and the "Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles." St. Ignatius of Antioch, disciple of St. John, says in one of his letters (*ad Philad.,* ed. Migne, Greek Fathers V, p. 699.) "I have recourse to the Gospel as if to Christ corporally present, and to the Apostles (that is to say to their Epistles) as

to the present teaching of the Church.'' St. Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, another disciple of St. John, gives precise information about the writings of St. Matthew and of St. Mark, whom he designated by their names. (See Eusebius, ''Hist. Eccl.,'' III, xxxix.) In the second century St. Justin testifies that in his time *''the memoirs, or sacred record, which the Apostles called Gospels,''* were read in the meetings of the Christians. These documents, he says, were written by the Apostles and Apostolic men (that is to say by the Apostles Matthew and John and by the Apostolic men Mark and Luke). It is well known that St. Irenæus, disciple of St. Polycarp, who himself was a disciple of St. John, came from Asia Minor into Gaul, and occupied the episcopal see of Lyons, where he died a martyr in the year 202. We find in his works, besides the names of the four Evangelists, 234 texts taken from St. Matthew, 13 from St. Mark, 125 from St. Luke and 94 from St. John; moreover an analysis of the Gospel of St. Luke, corresponding exactly with the book which we have of that name. Origen, in Egypt, and Tertullian, in Proconsular Africa, also furnish us, as to the authenticity of the Gospel, with testimony most positive and of about the same antiquity. In Tertullian's works we meet with 925 texts of the Gospels. Origen enumerates the Gospel according to St. Luke among the four ''which alone,'' says he, ''are admitted without dispute by the universal Church.'' Indeed, by collecting together all the texts cited by the Fathers of the first and second centuries, from the author of the Epistle of St. Barnabas to Tertullian, we should be able to reconstruct all the Gospels. It is to be remarked that they appear in the writings of the Fathers in the very order of their publication; in the most ancient writings we only meet with texts from St. Matthew. (See Bougaud, ''Jesus Christ,'' ch. I, p. 234.) Here let us remark that to-day there is no longer any controversy regarding the date posterior to the year 150.

2. The agreement of *heretics* in the first centuries. The Gnostics knew the Gospels and frequently made use of them. Marcion falsified the Gospel of St. Luke, to adapt it to his errors. None of these heretics ever dreamed of questioning

the authenticity of the Gospels, so incontestable it appeared and excluding all doubt.

3. The agreement even of *pagans,* such as Celsus in the second century, Porphyry in the third, Julian, the Apostate in the fourth. These persistent and sagacious enemies of the Christian religion endeavored, it is true, to draw from the Gospel objections against the divine origin of these books, but they never ventured to attack their *authenticity.* Undoubtedly had this been possible, they would not have hesitated to have recourse to it, because it would be evidently the shortest and the most effective way to attack the Church of Christ.

In Father Didon's "Jésus-Christ," we find another proof drawn from the *translations* of the Gospels which were made at the very beginning of Christianity. (Introduction, xxviii.)

Third Argument. The Gospels have all the *intrinsic marks of authenticity* that could be desired. Far from meeting with anything in them opposed to the laws, usages, institutions, language, customs, manners, character, tastes, prejudices, in a word, anything opposed to the social and religious condition of Judea at that time, we find, on the contrary, everything described with scrupulous accuracy and details so precise that none but ocular witnesses would have known and related these facts. We must say the same as to all that concerns the history, geography, topography, numismatics of that time. The English writers Lardner and Paley have shown that the conformity of the Gospels with the state of Roman society, at the time of Augustus, as it is known to us from other sources, is perfect even in the minutest details. It would have been absolutely impossible for a *later* writer not to have made mistakes, especially on some very obscure and complicated points concerning the first century. It results, manifestly, from a great number of passages, that the Jews, to whom St. Matthew addressed his Gospel, must have inhabited Jerusalem *before* its destruction and ruin under Vespasian. The Jerusalem of Agrippa appears so vivid and full of life, that rationalists do not dare place the writing of this Gospel beyond the years that followed immediately the

destruction of the holy city; otherwise how could they account for the fact that there should have remained so fresh a memory of the destroyed city? And moreover, if some implacable enemies of our Sacred Books have endeavored to fix the date of the writing of the first Gospel at a period later than the year 70, it was not that they had plausible motives for so doing; it was solely because they found in this Gospel the prophecy of the ruin of Jerusalem and of the Temple; and as they proclaimed the impossibility of all prophecy, they perforce had to declare that this prophecy was written after the event.

Fourth Argument. The preceding proofs are more than sufficient to establish in a peremptory manner the authenticity of the Gospels. We can go further and show that *it is impossible that those books should not be authentic.* In fact, from the testimonies indicated above, it follows that these books were universally acknowledged as authentic at the commencement of the second century, and even during the first century. We do not mean to say that at such an early period all the Sacred Books were universally known as inspired, and forming one integral canonical body. For it is plain that they could not have been communicated and received as such at once in all the churches; but one thing is certain, and that is the fact that each book of the New Testament had in its favor many a testimony to guarantee its authority. (See Tradition, n. 201.) If there had been any imposture, it necessarily should have taken place during the *lifetime* of the Apostles, or *shortly after their death.* These two suppositions are equally inadmissible, because, in such an event, loud protests would have at once arisen, either from the Apostles themselves, who were so anxious to maintain purity of faith, or from their immediate disciples, and also from pagans and heretics, who would have been only too glad to unmask and expose the imposture practiced on the people. Nothing of the kind occurred. The faithful have never hesitated to receive these writings as coming from the Apostles; whilst the appearance of false, apocryphal gospels has always

aroused protests on the part of the most eminent Christian doctors.

Conclusion. From all these arguments as convincing as it is possible and reasonable to expect in the domain of history, it follows that the Gospels are certainly authentic. This indeed is acknowledged even by the principal representatives of negative criticism in Germany. Compelled by the result of their works, which he copies, Renan himself was, by the evidence of facts, forced to come to this avowal: "In fine, I admit as authentic the four canonical Gospels. All, according to my view, go back to the first century, and it is about true to admit that they are the work of the writers to whom they are attributed." Here Renan implies a doubt, slight indeed, "about true"; it is strange to hear of a doubt concerning such a simple question of fact. But we must not be too exacting as to a reluctant admission, such as that of Renan. See the work of M. Fouard, "St. Pierre et les premières années du Christianisme" (St. Peter and the First Years of Christianity), xxii; Heiss, "The Four Gospels examined and vindicated"; de Goesbriand, "Labors of the Apostles"; Schmid, "Manual of Patrology"; J. J. Burke, "Characteristics of the Early Church"; Hettinger, "Revealed Religion," iv, 95; Picard, "Christianity or Agnosticism?" part II, ii, 299; Schanz, "Apology of Christianity," II, xii, 376.

§ II. Integrity of the Gospels

192. First Argument. To prove the integrity of the Gospels, viz.: that they have not been tampered with or altered, we might content ourselves with quoting the following words from the learned linguist, Cardinal Wiseman (Disc. 10, "Etudes orientales," Oriental studies, Lecture 10th.) Here is how the case stands: "Though every available source of information has been resorted to: though all the interpretations and explanations of scriptural texts given by the Fathers of the first ten centuries, as well as the versions of nearly all languages, the Arabian, the Syrian, the Coptic, the Armenian,

the Ethiopian, have been consulted, with the purpose of ascertaining the true meaning of those texts; though the manuscript copies of all countries and of all times, from the sixteenth century up to the third, have been diligently scrutinized by a multitude of learned scholars, anxious to seize on their hidden treasures; though many critics, after having exhausted the riches of Western lore, traveled to distant countries in search of new testimonies; though they fathomed, as it is said of Scholz and Sebastiani, the depths of Mount Athos and the libraries of the desert of Egypt and Syria, yet, notwithstanding all these scrupulous researches of past records, they have not been able to discover one single version or copy, duly authenticated, that might throw even the shadow of a doubt on any passage, that, before all these minute investigations, was held as certain and decisive in favor of this or that part of sacred doctrine."

We possess about 500 old manuscripts of the Gospel, dating from the time of Constantine to the XVIth century. The principal are: the *Codex Vaticanus,* the Alexandrine, the Palimpsest of St. Ephrem, possessed by the National Library of Paris, and the *Codex Sinaiticus* (Sinaitic). All these manuscripts, even the most ancient, agree *substantially* with each other. They agree also with the innumerable quotations contained in the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. The Gospels have therefore remained such as they were written at the beginning.

We have seen that the result of the studies made of the manuscripts of the *Old Testament* has been exactly the same. The infidels were, therefore, compelled to acknowledge their discomfiture, but they did so not without giving vent to their spiteful regrets.

Second Argument. Moreover, such alteration would have been absolutely *impossible,* owing to the fact that it was a question of books held in the highest esteem, and so universally scattered from the very beginning. For we may ask, when could any alteration have been made? At *the time of the Apostles?* By no means, for they could not have been ignorant of such an attempt, nor would they have permitted

it without the most vigorous protest. *Could* this have been done *after their death?* No, their disciples would have noticed it and protested. *A little later, perhaps?* The copies of these writings were too numerous, and exercising such a vigilant control on each other that no substantial change could have been introduced without provoking violent protests, either on the part of Christians or heretics, even on the part of the Jews and pagans. Nothing of the kind occurred. Bishop Spiridion, as Sozomenes remarks, openly rebuked a fellow bishop, who, in quoting a text, substituted another word having the same meaning as the original, but which appeared more elegant. St. Jerome could with difficulty be prevailed upon by Pope Damasus to revise the Latin version of the Bible, for fear of being looked upon by the people as a corrupter of the sacred text, should they find some alterations (*Prafat. ad Evang. ad Dam.*) And this fear of St. Jerome was certainly not groundless, as we learn from a letter of St. Augustine to the same (*Epist. 71, ad Hieron.*, edit. 1679): "A bishop of our province," writes the saint, "having begun to read your translation of the Bible in his church, came to a passage of the prophet Jonas, which you have translated differently from what was known to the memory and ears of every one, and sung during many generations. Thereupon a great tumult arose among the people, caused principally by the Greeks, who called out that the text was falsified. The bishop saw himself obliged to appeal to the testimony of some Jews; these, either through ignorance or malice, stated that the Hebrew text was the same as the Greek and the old Latin version. The bishop, not to remain without a flock, after this great danger, was obliged to correct the passage as if it were a fault." (Jouin, "Evidences of Religion," p. 177.) We must not forget that on the testimony of Tertullian the autographs of the Apostolic writings were still extant at the commencement of the third century, and that already in the second century, as is stated by St. Justin, the Gospels were publicly read during the celebration of the holy offices of the Liturgy. At the present time, says Aug. Nicolas, it would be utterly impossible to alter the Sacred Books, because they are

in the hands of all Catholics, the Pope, the bishops, the priests and the faithful; because they are in the hands of heretics and Jews; because they are in the hands of unbelievers, and they would not fail to denounce the fraud as soon as it appeared, if any one were to attempt to tamper with the sacred text as held to-day. Now, that which is impossible in the present time, because of this triple rank of incorruptible sentinels, has always been impossible in the past, because the conditions were ever the same before as they are to-day.

Remark. Undoubtedly there are many different *readings* called *variants,* in the various manuscripts of the New Testament, but they prove nothing against the integrity of the Scriptures. The same thing has happened and could not but have happened to all the books that antiquity has bequeathed to us. We know that the different readings of the works of Horace have furnished material for three large volumes. It was to be expected that the Gospels should, above all other books, be subject to these different readings, for no book has been more frequently copied, translated, commented upon, at all times and in all places. God was not bound to perform a continuous series of miracles to preserve the Gospels from a certain liability to changes in the text, without detriment to the fundamental part of those sacred books. We may even say that, far from proving anything against the integrity of the Holy Books, the great number of different readings only confirm it all the more; as they leave untouched the essential parts of each phrase, it is clear that those non-essential alterations are due solely to errors of copyists or translators, and that the idea of introducing a substantial change had never occurred to any one as at all possible in such a book.

§ III. Veracity of the Gospels

193. We shall now prove that the authors of the Gospels (*a*) could not have been deceived about the events which they related; (*b*) that they did not wish to deceive; (*c*) that even if they had desired to deceive, they could not have done so. From the cumulative assemblage of these proofs will neces-

sarily result the conviction of the incontestable exactness of their account.

A. *These writers could not have been deceived,* because they related what they had themselves seen or heard from entirely reliable ocular witnesses. The facts, moreover, were recent, obvious, striking, and done in full day-light, often in the presence of a considerable crowd of people, and under the very eyes of the enemies of Christ, who did not deny them, but sought to explain them away by attributing them to diabolical intervention. Moreover, these facts were of the greatest importance, from the point of view of religion, to the Jewish people, and consequently of the greatest interest to them; finally, they were often *extraordinary* and *marvellous,* and thereby of a nature to attract attention. No one will surely venture to say that the authors of the Gospels were all blind and deaf, or the victims of hallucination. In that case the same thing must be said of a multitude of their contemporaries, even among the enemies of Christ, because even these have admitted without protest the veracity of the evangelical narrative. It is therefore certain that these writers could not have been deceived.

B. *But did they wish to deceive?* No; by no means, for they were simple men of irreproachable character, full of sincerity and of good faith. It suffices to read the Gospels without prejudice to be convinced that these historians could not be impostors; the honest and candid tone of their narrative is a sure warrant of their truthfulness. They had, besides, no interest to induce them to be guilty of so odious an act. Now, no man becomes an impostor without a motive. Far from having any reason to hope for benefits resulting from a fraud, not less prejudicial to the Jews than to the pagans, they had to expect only that which they received in reality: contempt, outrage, persecution, and even death. (I Pet. 4, 15.) Who does not know that they bore witness to their truthfulness even at the price of their blood? Pascal was right in saying: "I willingly believe historians whose witnesses are willing to suffer death itself to maintain the truth of their testimony." Moreover, all the opponents of

Christianity agree in admitting the good faith of the writers of the Gospel.

C. Finally, *they could not have deceived.* In fact, they described events at a time when many witnesses of these events were still living, who would not have failed to denounce and refute any imposture. The Jews, especially, had the greatest interest in doing so. The chiefs of the Synagogue, not being able to deny the facts, endeavored to stamp out the new religion by imposing silence upon the Apostles; but they found it impossible to deny the truths of the Gospel narrative. If protests and denials had been possible, they would have been all the more emphatic and numerous as they referred to public events of the greatest importance; the facts were represented as having taken place but a short time previously in all parts of Judea and in the very city of Jerusalem, in the presence of many witnesses whose names are given; many of these events had as participants and actors, men in high position, enemies of Jesus Christ, interested in exposing any fraud. Strange to say, not one voice arose to confute these supposed impostors! The supposition, then, of fraud, in the present case, is manifestly absurd.

Furthermore, how many *absurdities* would have to be admitted if it be claimed that the writers of the New Testament had imagined or invented what they related!

1. A few illiterate and uneducated fishermen would have conceived in their imagination a *hero* of so grand a character and so pure a life that Jean-Jacques Rousseau is constrained to burst forth with a cry of irrepressible admiration: "Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God." These same ignorant men would have conceived in their own mind and attributed to their hero a doctrine of a holiness, of a depth and sublimity far more exalted than anything the most illustrious philosophers of antiquity ever conceived. "To imagine a Newton, one must be himself a Newton," says Parker. "Where is the man who could have imagined a Jesus? Jesus alone was capable of doing so."

The following is the position of the rationalist higher critics Strauss and Renan and their modern adherents.

"Excluding, as they do, all miraculous intervention of the omnipotent Deity, a few Galileans, unaided, poor and most of them illiterate, devised the ideal Christ, and, upon this imaginary basis, reared the mighty edifice of the Catholic Church that yet stands to-day in all its grandeur and thus achieved an undertaking which no philosopher ever conceived. This dream or myth has quickened and developed the keenest intellects for nearly two thousand years: has inspired millions to lead lives of self-sacrifice and suffering and to shed their blood for its truth amidst the most exquisite torments that diabolical malice could suggest and men's cruelty inflict, and finally produced the whole system of civilization, on which the world's order rests. This same Faith still quickens the nigh three hundred million members of the Catholic Church with all her marvellous institutions for every need of man and gives her a vitality which though ever assailed is ever triumphant." (Hettinger, "Revealed Religion," iv.) *To admit all this* as accomplished by the twelve illiterate, unaided Jews of Galilee, is evidently the height of absurdity, which no reasonable self-respecting man will admit. But substitute for them the intervention of divine omnipotence and the all-powerful aid of supernatural grace, and all absurdity will at once disappear. This is the solution which the greatest geniuses that ever lived have given to the mighty problem. *To defend Christianity* and its evangelical records, we need not discuss the multitude of hypotheses devised by the fertile brain of higher critics: they are all ephemeral, mutually destructive, dying almost as soon as they appear. Since the year 1850 there have been published 747 theories regarding the Old and the New Testament, all opposed to Catholic doctrine, and, of these, 608 are now defunct. (H. S. Hastings, "Anti-infidel Library.") All false theories invented to demolish the sacred record are shattered on the hard impregnable rock of historic truth.

2. Contrary to the habit of impostors, these men in relating the life of an imaginary hero, entered into the minutest

details of time, place and person, thus affording every opportunity to oppose a solemn denial to their assertions. Moreover, whilst thus inventing, they would have succeeded in establishing everywhere perfect verisimilitude and an absolute conformity with all that we know of that epoch so fully described to us by the light of history.

3. These men, as ignorant as malicious, would have written these fables, born of their imagination, in a style so candid and so simple as to be inimitable. There is no affectation, no bombast, no exaggerated expression in their account, nothing that denotes passion, or betrays the desire to please. The most astonishing facts are described with simplicity, without personal reflections, without other preoccupation than that of stating facts just as they knew them. These historians do not conceal the humbleness of their birth, nor the narrowness of their ideas, nor the reprimands which they received from their master. In a word, the accent of truth in all these pages, though due to different pens, is so striking that it carries conviction to the mind of all sincere men. Rousseau himself could not refrain from exclaiming: "Shall we say that the history of the Gospel was wantonly invented? My friend, it is not in this way that men invent facts; the story of Socrates, of which no one has any doubt, is less strongly attested than the deeds of Jesus Christ. At the least, it is to thrust back the difficulty without removing it; it would be more inconceivable that four men should have agreed to forge this book, than to believe that only one person had supplied the subject matter. The Jewish authors could never have found such a tone, or such a moral doctrine; the Gospel has characteristics of truth so great, so striking, so inimitable, that the inventor of such a work would be a more wonderful man than its hero."

4. The different writers of the Gospels, of the Acts of the Apostles and of the Epistles, though separated by time and place, have, nevertheless, been able to agree so perfectly in their supposed imaginary narratives, quite different in style and form, as to make it impossible for the shrewdest critic to detect in their writings any *real* and *substantial* contradiction.

For as to the accidental discrepancies and *apparent* contradictions to be met with in the four Gospels, they furnish an additional argument in favor of the veracity of their authors, as they prove that there was no collusion or preconcerted agreement among them as to the events they were to narrate. Hence, the manner in which the Evangelists relate those events bears in itself the stamp of truth. They *differ,* it is true, in some trifling details, from each other, but do not *contradict* each other; their candor and simplicity cannot fail to excite the admiration of every fair-minded reader. Such is always the testimony of truthful witnesses and honest historians who relate the same events, each one according to his style.

5. All these writers, though impelled by no interest, either of this world or of the next, either temporal or eternal, have sealed with their blood a story which they knew to be but an invention of their brains. After them, millions of martyrs suffered *death,* to testify their faith in the same falsehood. Who can admit such gratuitous assertions as these?

6. And these same men, who, in the supposition of our adversaries, were but a pack of vile impostors, would, without human aid, have succeeded in their fraud so fully as to overthrow not only Judaism, so ancient and so firmly rooted as it was, but also paganism, which had on its side wealth, science, power, the attractions and allurements of a morality favorable to the passions and pandering to man's lowest appetites; they would have succeeded in causing a repentant world to prostrate itself at the feet of a supposed criminal, put to death on the ignominious cross; they would have persuaded an infinite number of men to renounce what they had believed and practiced up to that time, and to adopt a religion that presented to the mind unfathomable mysteries and to the will a morality conflicting with all the instincts of sensual nature.

7. A religion that *regenerated* mankind, created the modern world built on the ruins of the old; a religion that inspired its morality, organized its institutions, and dictated its laws; a religion that has been everywhere an inexhaustible source of truths, virtues, benefactions; that num-

bers among its disciples a countless multitude of *learned men and of saints;* that, after so many centuries, still assuages the most inconsolable sorrows, such a religion, according to our opponents' theory, would be founded on a lie, devised by a few fishermen of Galilee. Who could believe such an absurdity as this?

8. Finally, God Himself would have confirmed the fraud of these impostors, by fulfilling the *prophecies* invented by them, which they falsely attributed to Jesus, and by performing *innumerable miracles* in favor of their disciples and their successors. God Himself would thus have contributed to lead the human race into error, a supposition not less blasphemous than absurd.

In truth, if all these impossibilities had been realized, we should indeed be justified in exclaiming with Richard of St. Victor: "Lord, if I am in error, it is by Thee that I have been deceived, for the Christian religion is confirmed by prodigies and miracles, so astounding and so numerous that it can only have come from Thee. *Domine, si erro, a te ipso deceptus sum, nam ista in nobis tantis signis et talibus confirmata sunt, quæ non nisi per te fieri possent.*" (De Trinit., i, 2; see Panegyric of St. Andrew by Bossuet.) We may with truth apply here those words of the royal Psalmist: "*Thy testimonies, O Lord, are become exceedingly credible.*" (Ps. 92, 5.)

194. Summary and Conclusion. To recapitulate what we have said, we cannot do better than quote a fine passage from de Broglie (L'Eglise et l'Empire romain au IV siècle—The Church and the Roman Empire in the IV Century): "The events of which the Gospels offer us the spectacle have not occurred, as those of ancient religions, in the distant past, half-heroic, half-barbaric, in some desert or unknown country. It is in the midst of a fully civilized society, in the principal city of a Roman province, visited shortly before by Pompey, and described shortly after by Tacitus, that Jesus Christ lived, preached, organized and established His Church, and sacrificed His life. His biography does not come down to us transmitted from mouth to mouth by rhapsodists and magni-

fied in the course of ages by fanatic enthusiasm and popular credulity. Four narratives, simple in form, precise, harmonious and consonant in their account, written by ocular or contemporary witnesses, in a language perfectly intelligible, these are the documents on which is founded the religion of Jesus Christ. The concert of ancient testimonies, the prompt diffusion of its tenets, the resemblance of texts spread over the whole world, the conformity of the narrative with contemporary chronology, *these* are the titles that give to the Gospel writings such a value as to make them take the first rank with the authentic monuments of the past. Certainty as to facts can be grounded on no other foundation, and the criticism of the texts can demand nothing more. We know Jesus Christ through the writings of His disciples St. John and St. Matthew; St. Paul through those of St. Luke, the companion of his travels. Do we know Alexander or Augustus by other means than by the story of their companions-in-arms or of their courtiers? Because the facts concern faith and astound reason; because they carry with them moral consequences, can *that* be considered as a sufficient motive for disregarding in their case all the ordinary rules of human judgment? We ask for the Gospels no other favor than this, that they be not ostracized or deprived of the common right which is sanctioned by honest criticism and the impartial verdict of mankind." In concluding his fine work on "The Belief Due to the Gospel" (La croyance due à l'Evangile), Mr. Wallon says: "If, in forming a judgment about the integrity, veracity and authenticity of books, ancient and modern, men were to be as exacting as they are with respect to the New Testament, the history of literature would yet have to be written, because of the absence of witnesses duly authenticated; we should still be in the remote age of mythology."

195. **A.** General Answer to the Objections against the Authority of the Gospels. We cannot here enter into the details of the objections that it has pleased some men to accumulate against the veracity of the Gospels. They are set forth and triumphantly refuted in special works. Besides, our position in the thesis we are now defending, does not in

any way require particular refutation of each of these objections, seeing that at the present moment we are treating of the veracity of the Sacred Writings *only from the historical point of view*. Wherefore, we limit ourselves to a few reflections, which we shall also borrow from M. de Broglie. We will, however, add a few remarks on certain special points.

All the objections, which are generally brought forward, either against the authenticity of the Gospels or against the truth of the events therein related, are necessarily classified under the three following heads:

1. The miraculous character of the facts narrated.

2. Discordance or want of agreement among the different Gospel narratives.

3. Contradiction or opposition between certain facts related by the Evangelists and those asserted by the chronology of contemporary history, as given by writers of profane or secular history.

Let us see what we should think of those several grounds of accusation.

1. The miraculous character of the facts of the Gospels proves absolutely nothing against their authenticity and truth, unless it be claimed *a priori*, and without any proof, that all miracles are impossible. As soon as we admit, as required by logic and common sense, the possibility of miracles, we can no longer bring forward against the Gospel writers the miraculous events as related by them in their writings: these facts evidently could have been proven, as any other facts, by the senses in the first place, and afterwards by testimony after occurrence. We shall speak further on of the possibility of miracles and the proofs of their occurrence. (Part V, nn. 206-213.)

2. As to disagreements noticed in the Gospels, they may be divided into two classes: dissimilarity by *omission*, when one Evangelist omits what another relates, when one is silent whilst another speaks; and dissimilarity by *contradiction*, when several Evangelists give of the same fact narratives which appear at first sight to be irreconcilable. Should the reader wish to know and examine the different systems

adopted by biblical scholars in accounting for both the dissimilarities and the discrepancies of the four Gospels, he may, with profit, consult the work of Abbé Fillion, "Les Saints Evangélistes" (The Holy Evangelists), vol. I, p. 59.

The first class of differences is of no importance, and this is true of most of the dissimilarities met with in the Gospels. It is known, moreover, that the Apostles, whose teachings, according to the habit of the Jewish rabbis and the precept and example of Jesus, were essentially oral, wrote only as occasion demanded, without any intention of forming a complete body of doctrine or of relating all the acts of our Blessed Savior. The Evangelists expressly declare that they are far from writing everything which they knew about the subject. Here is what one of them, the Apostle St. John, tells us on this point: *"But there are also many other things which Jesus did; which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written."* (John 21, 25.)

Dissimilarities by *contradiction* offer a more serious difficulty. But let us carefully observe: contradictions between two accounts of the same fact, even if duly proven, only permit us to contest the exactness of certain *details;* they do not give us the right to reject the *substance* of the fact itself nor the other facts about which the accounts agree. Now, all the apparent contradictions among the Evangelists only refer to *insignificant points,* to details without importance. When it is a question of an *inspired writer,* we cannot attribute *any error to him;* but here it must not be forgotten that we are following the argument of M. de Broglie, who is considering the Gospels merely as *historical documents.* (See n. 200, Inspiration.) As to the substance of the history, and the precious and touching truths which flow from the simple account of the Gospels, the agreement remains perfect and complete in every respect. In no instance have any writers so well depicted the same person; never before have writers proceeded in that perfect unity which is the exclusive privilege of truth.

3. Concerning disagreements of the Gospels as to facts of

the history of that time, we must make the same distinction, which will lead us to the same conclusion. These disagreements, which are, at most, but few in number, may be divided into *omissions* and *contradictions*.

The first class proves nothing against the sacred writers, especially because the Gospel history referred not to facts, which *at that time* should have been perfectly known to the historians of Rome and form part of contemporary annals, but to the history of a carpenter, inhabiting an obscure provincial town, and whose influence was at first so limited as not to attract the attention of writers of the day, such as Suetonius and Tacitus. When the Christians had multiplied sufficiently in Rome itself to arouse the attention of the philosophers and of the Roman rulers, that is, about thirty years after the death of Christ, it was then only that the great annalists might have mentioned them. It is precisely at that time that Tacitus shows us the Christians (members, as he styled them, of the sect of Christ) persecuted in Rome by Nero.

There remain the *contradictions*, which may be met with in the few dates referred to in the Gospel history and those mentioned in the general chronology of contemporary history. As we have already said, even if we could not explain them directly, or cause them to disappear by any plausible supposition, there would result only a doubt as to the date of certain Gospel facts, or concerning the name of some governor of Judea at a certain time, and other *absolutely secondary points*. But the essential facts would remain still untouched: it would be none the less an undoubted fact that Jesus Christ had come into the world, that He had performed miracles, that He died on the cross, and that He arose again from the dead.

But it is then not secondary points, but capital facts, about which no contest of opinion is possible, that will enable us to prove the divinity of Jesus Christ and of His work, the Christian religion.

B. Answer to Some Particular Objections. Before going further, let us remark that there is nothing surprising that some difficulty should be met with in interpreting texts,

which concern people whose customs, habits, and language differ so much from ours. Many things might have been very clear and easily understood by contemporaries, which are obscure for us, and seem at times to imply contradiction. Indeed, the progress of linguistics, numismatics, history and geography are dispelling, year by year, dark points, to give place to the full light of day.

196. First Objection. There are false Gospels; hence our Gospel may be false too.

Answer. 1. We might as well say: there is false, counterfeit money; therefore there is no good genuine money. The contrary is true, and we can say with Pascal: "In place of concluding that there are no true Gospels, because there are false ones, we should, on the contrary, say that there are true Gospels, because there are false Gospels, and there are false Gospels only because there are true Gospels." The apocryphal Gospels could only have been counterfeits of the true Gospels, to which, by their very existence, they render testimony. For, if the authors of apocryphal Gospels have ventured, and not without a certain measure of success, to relate certain facts, it was because these facts were more or less in harmony with the authentic Gospels of which they were taking the appearance and authority; it was because the facts of both were in agreement with recent events, with tradition, and with the monuments and contemporary recollections of Judea.

As the Schoolmen taught, falsehood is founded on truth. This is the reasoning of St. Thomas: "A thing external to the soul is said to be false in as much as it tends to produce of itself a false idea by its action on the cognitive faculty. Hence what is said to be false must be some being: and as every being, as such, is true, it follows that falsehood found in things is ultimately based on the truth (which it attempts to counterfeit). (De veritate, q. 1, a. 10.)

2. We have *sure proofs* that the Gospels known as apocryphal are *really* aprocryphal. It is quite the contrary as to our four Gospels: their authenticity and truth are established by positive proofs. In proportion as these bear the characteristics of truth, the others are marked with the stamp of im-

probability or bad faith. "These compositions," says Renan, "can by no manner or means be placed upon the same footing as the canonical Gospels."

3. The apocryphal Gospels have never been accepted by the Church, and they have now disappeared, whilst our four Gospels have always been distinguished and received as the only authentic Gospels, not only by the Church, but by heretics and the pagans themselves. "The Church," says Origen, "has four Gospels, heresy has a greater number."

197. Second Objection. "Every religion, among the Greeks and Romans, among the Germans and the people of India," says Strauss, "begins with myths, that is to say, fabulous accounts, where, under the figure of a man who never existed, they set forth a moral idea, a physical fact, etc." It is the same, he claims, with the Christian religion, that which belongs to all mankind is attributed to a single hero, Jesus Christ.

Answer. 1. What we have said, when referring to the absurd consequences which would have resulted from imposture on the part of the Apostles, applies most appropriately to the hypothesis of a myth. It would, then, be a myth, a lying impostor, that would have founded an institution so real and so full of life and indestructible as the Church; then it was a myth that has brought about the conversion of the world, and it was to uphold this fabrication of a myth that its authors allowed themselves to be put to death, and after them millions of men submitted to the same fate! Can any reasonable man admit such an absurdity as this?

2. That other religions should be founded on fabulous legends is quite natural and even necessary, because they are false. Hence the reason why care is taken by their advocates to refer their origin to prehistoric times, that is, to an epoch of darkness, when the imagination of poets could give itself full play. It is quite different when we speak of Christianity. Those that professed belief in it *belong to an epoch full of historical light*, of intellectual activity, and even of skepticism, consequently to a period of time when a fabulous account would have no more chance of success than it would have in

our own day. How can people compare the mythical personages of other religions with the mighty figure and personality of Jesus Christ, so vivid and so loving, invested with a sweet and simple majesty? Let them compare the mythical accounts always so cloudy and ambiguous, in which are mixed up in an inextricable confusion, time, place and persons, with the Gospel narrative, so full of details and so precise in regard to the leading figures of the Gospel, and we are sure that the most superficial observer cannot fail to see in the Gospels the most undoubted characteristic marks of historical truth.

3. To apply the theory of myths to Jesus Christ is *to destroy all history*. Most assuredly, no one has any doubts of the existence and deeds of Napoleon I. Yet, by having recourse to the myth system, one might show in quite a plausible way that the great conqueror of modern times never existed. The reader will find in the work of Mercade's entitled "Etudes de science religieuse" (Studies of Religious Science), a very clever essay of this kind, written for the purpose of refuting Strauss and his ilk. If it should be answered that Napoleon's work survives him, and, as it were, loudly protests against the hypothesis of a myth, we will make no denial; but we shall then be allowed to remark that for nineteen hundred years, the Church and all Christian society, the work of Jesus Christ, shine forth in all their splendor before the eyes of the whole world; hence, the very existence of these astonishing facts proves that Jesus Christ, such as He is described in the Gospels, was the greatest and the most powerful reality that every appeared on the face of the earth. (See the 43d Conference of Lacordaire, 1846.)

198. Third Objection. Renan, in his "Life of Jesus," not daring to reproduce Strauss's absurd system, modifies it, but in such a way as to aim at the same wicked end, that is, to deny the divinity of Jesus Christ. Rejecting the supernatural and miracles, he is, of course, compelled to deny everything that is supernatural and miraculous in the Redeemer's life. In all the wonderful events of the Gospel he

sees only the product of the excited imagination of the disciples, legends without historical value.

Answer. Without repeating here the many magnificent and crushing refutations which have been given of the sad, impious *romance* of that author (Renan), we shall content ourselves with a few reflections.

(1) All Renan's system rests on the assertion of the non-existence of the supernatural and the miraculous. But a miracle is possible, as we shall show shortly, and there have been a great number of miracles. It is evident that the existence of a *single* miracle since the commencement of the world, if duly established, is argument enough to upset and pull down the whole flimsy framework of Renan's theory.

(2) All that we have said of Strauss's system of myths, *applies* equally to Renan's *system of legends:* the arguments which destroy the one overthrow the other.

(3) In affecting respect for Christ, Renan places himself *in contradiction* with his own system. Whatever he may say, Jesus Christ cannot be in his eyes anything else but a vile, despicable impostor, if knowing Himself to be a man like any other, He asserted that He was God and allowed Himself to be honored as a worker of miracles and to be adored as a God.

(4) What authority can a writer have who gives many and manifest proofs of *bad faith?* Who is ignorant of this? Renan, in his "Life of Jesus" falsifies Gospel texts with unheard of shamelessness; he cites them in a sense manifestly opposed to their natural and evident meaning; to inspire the readers with a conviction of his sincerity he refers them to authorities which say precisely the contrary of what he pretends. The reader can find many proofs of this absolute want of honesty in the interesting pamphlet of Henri Lasserre's entitled "Le 13e Apôtre" (The 13th Apostle).

199. The Pentateuch as well as the Gospels therefore possess undeniable authority as historical documents, and we can consequently rely with full confidence upon them to prove the existence of a divinely revealed religion, the divine mission of Jesus Christ, and the heavenly origin of His work, the Christian religion. The advocates of the rational-

istic school refuse to see in Him an envoy of God. They admit, however, at times, that He is a wise man, who, by the power of His genius, has made mankind advance in civilization and moral culture; whilst at other times they brand Him as an arrant impostor, who has too long misled humanity. We shall meet these impious accusations face to face by showing that Jesus Christ was really sent by God to announce to men and to impose upon them a religion more perfect than any other, past, present or future.

Fourth Objection. The notorious rationalist, Tom Paine, attacked the integrity of both the Old and the New Testament by insinuating that the early Christians so manipulated those records as to cause the prophecies perfectly to harmonize with what they represented as their fulfillment.

Answer. The calumnious charge is easily refuted. First, it was impossible for the primitive Christians to tamper with the Old Testament, for the Jews, a very interested party, were there to watch them. The discovery of such a fraud, if at all attempted, would have justified Judaism and Paganism in denouncing Christianity as a huge imposture.

Secondly, neither was it possible for Jews and Pagans to tamper with the writings of the New Testament, for the Christians, many of whom had been eyewitnesses of the narrated events, were likewise there to prevent it. Any tampering with the sacred records becomes, in the course of centuries, more impossible in proportion to the thousands of manuscripts and printed copies scattered throughout the world.

Inspiration

200. As we stated above (n. 151), in this Fourth Part, we proved or confirmed the several topics we met with in the course of our discussion from passages of Sacred Scripture considered simply as historical documents, proved to be authentic, genuine and veracious, and therefore most trustworthy. In fact, competent critics have shown that the records of both Testaments contain intrinsic as well as ex-

trinsic evidences of credibility far beyond those of any secular history. On this account St. Augustine asks, "What literary work shall have any weight of authority, if it be denied to the evangelical and Apostolic writings?" (Contra Faustum, xxxiii, 6.)

But every Christian believer cannot but rejoice when he remembers that the Scriptures possess a much higher authority: they contain and convey God's own word and message to men. Hence the Catholic Church rightly declared that the canonical books (n. 149) have divine as well as human authority. The official catalogue of inspired books, technically called the Canon, given with papal sanction, in the provincial Council of Carthage in the year 397, approved by Innocent I, in A.D. 402 and Gelasius I in A.D. 492, confirmed by the general Councils of Florence and Trent, is identical with that of the Vatican Council, which, in 1870, issued the following dogmatic decree. "The books of the Old and the New Testament are to be received as sacred and canonical in their integrity, with all their parts as they are enumerated in the decree of the said council (of Trent) and are contained in the ancient Latin edition of the Vulgate. These the Church holds to be sacred and canonical, not because having been carefully composed by human industry, they were afterwards approved by her authority, not merely because they contain revelation, with no admixture of error, but because, having been written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author, and have been delivered as such to the Church herself." (De revelat., ii, can. 4.)

The official, authorized version of the Scripture used by the Church is the Latin Vulgate, translated from the Hebrew, Chaldæan and Greek originals by St. Jerome in the fifth century, and declared authentic by the Council of Trent, whose definition assures us that, being the inspired word of God, it contains nothing at variance with God's revelation as to faith and morals. The fact of inspiration, known only to the inspired writer himself, cannot be manifested to others, except by a divinely authorized infallible witness. Historic Christianity knows only one such witness, which alone can deter-

mine what books should be held as divinely inspired. As all Christian denominations, separated from the Catholic Church, disclaim infallibility, She alone remains as the solitary, unique competent authority fit to determine, without error, the divine character of the Sacred Books.

All Protestant attempts to decide this question independently of the authority of the Church have, as experience proves, invariably failed. *Inspiration lifts up* the Scriptures to a unique position immeasurably superior to that of all other writings, however excellent they may be. Hence the twofold weight of authority human and divine imparted to all demonstrations supported by quotations from Holy Writ. The *inerrancy* of the Catholic Church in pronouncing dogmatic definitions, which is now assumed, will be duly established in Part VII of our Course, where we treat of the prerogatives conferred by Jesus Christ on His Church, among which is reckoned the gift of infallibility. What is meant by *inspiration,* and what is its extent? Inspiration has been defined as a charisma-gratia gratis data—a special grace, by which the Holy Ghost moves, enlightens and assists the sacred writer so that he conceives exactly, reports faithfully and expresses with truthful accuracy what God intends him to write, acting all along as an intelligent and self-conscious agent of the Holy Spirit.

Inspiration includes the three following divine operations: First, the impulse of the chosen individuals to put in writing what God wills they should record. Second, the suggestion of the matter to be recorded, whether by revelation of truths not previously known, or only by the prompting of those things which were within the writer's knowledge. Third, the assistance excluding all liability to error in relating all things whatsoever that may be communicated by the Spirit of God. Of every inspired book man is the instrumental, God is the principal cause, as He guarantees the truth of what is written: hence the Bible, being the work of God, essential Truth, cannot contain any formal error. The instrumental activity of the inspired writer consists particularly in this, that, as occasion requires, he collects materials for his work, consults

documents, and compiles the narrative in his own peculiar style under divine guidance and direction. (See II Machabees, 2, 23-24; 15, 39-40; Luke 1, 1-4.) Hence the notable difference between the prophetic records of Isaias, a cultured man of the blood royal of the kings of Juda, and the homely pastoral style of the prophet Amos, a man of the field, a marked distinction which can be attributed only to the writers themselves. According to Cardinal Franzelin, in his classic "De divina traditione et Scriptura," the influence of the Holy Spirit extends to the minutest details. Therefore the inspired writer divinely guided will so select his words, and so form his sentences that they will rightly express the truths and the doctrines to be conveyed. Moreover, it must be held as a certainty that no errors are contained in the sacred writings. In the words of Pope Leo XIII: "It cannot be said that, because the Holy Ghost employed men as His instruments, they have fallen into error; for inspiration not only is incompatible with error, but excludes and rejects it absolutely, as it is impossible that God Himself, the Supreme Truth, can utter that which is not true. This is the unchanging faith of the Church, solemnly defined in the Councils of Florence and Trent and finally confirmed and more expressly formulated by the Council of the Vatican." (Encyclical "Providentissimus Deus," Nov. 18, 1893.) As to the Bible's incidental references to matters of natural sciences, we must bear in mind that God's purpose was not to reveal their hidden truths and teach geology or astronomy, a task left to human industry (Eccl. 3, 11), but to instruct mankind on divine things. Consequently the sacred writers made use of the popular language and ideas current at the time, and employed expressions best calculated to reveal the related matter both to the learned and to the illiterate. St. Augustine alluding to this subject said: "The Scripture speaks of natural things and events not with the precision required by science, but adapting itself to the popular conceptions of the generality of men." (See n. 157 for remarks by Kepler, the great astronomer.)

Tradition

201. In theological parlance, Tradition is the attestation, otherwise than by the Sacred Scripture, of a fact, a dogma, or a custom. If this attestation, made at first by word of mouth, has been afterwards inserted in the writings of the Fathers or in historical documents, it is called written Tradition; if not so included, it is oral Tradition. If the authors of the Tradition are the Apostles themselves, it is called Apostolic Tradition.

The term *Tradition* is applied by theologians at times to the body of truths and precepts communicated at first by the Apostles by word of mouth; it is thus that we say: the deposit of Apostolic Tradition; at other times it applies to the fact itself of the uninterrupted transmission of these truths or precepts; thus we say that such a dogma or such a precept of morality is proven by Tradition; and finally, it applies in a comprehensive manner or sense, to these same truths and precepts as transmitted from age to age from the Apostles to ourselves. It is in this latter sense that we use it here.

Among the truths which are attested by Tradition alone, and which are not explicitly taught by the Holy Scriptures, we could cite, for instance, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin; the validity of baptism when conferred by heretics with the required matter and form; the practice of infant baptism, and above all the authentic canon or catalogue of the inspired books of the Old and the New Testaments, carefully separated from all spurious and apocryphal admixture, preserved in the Catholic Church and transmitted to us.

There are three principal organs of Tradition, that is to say, three means by which we can ascend without risk of error to the Apostolic source: the universal and constant belief of the Church, sacred liturgy, ancient historical monuments, and in particular the writings of the Holy Fathers. In this connection it is highly important to point out that the Protestant contention assuming the Holy Scriptures as the sole basis, upon which the faith is built, cannot be accepted by any

Catholic, or indeed by any reasonable man who understands the situation. Our beliefs about Jesus Christ, His person, His divinity, His work, the founding of His Church, etc., are identically the same as those which were held by the Apostles, and by the first generation of Christians. It follows, then, that the foundation on which our faith and its rule are built is the same as that upon which their faith then rested, which is equivalent to saying that it is not built upon the records of the New Testament, since these records were not then as yet in existence. The written testimony, which appeared later, is indeed the most valuable source, to which we go for information about the life of Christ and the deeds He performed, but it is not the only possible source and still less is it the foundation of the Christian faith. Moreover, no competent authority taught that men were to take the writings of the Apostles and their disciples, Mark and Luke, for the sole rule of faith, discipline and worship and to seek in them alone the knowledge of God's revelation. Neither was it anywhere said that the authors of the New Testament had written down all that was essential for believers, or all they had taught by word of mouth. (See John 21, 25.) All this is clear enough, but unfortunately it has become obscured in many minds through the doings of the Reformers of the 16th century. These men, in revolt against the authority of the Catholic Church, found themselves confronted, if they would not destroy Christianity altogether, by the necessity of discovering some foundation for their novel religion other than that which they were endeavoring to overthrow. They found it in the Bible: the Bible freely interpreted by each individual, which was to supplant the Church and to be looked upon as the highest and only tribunal to be appealed to for settling all questions that might arise. The Reformers' scheme is bringing about its own revenge through the ever-growing disruption of the sects and the undermining and sapping of their newly-discovered foundation through the destructive blasts of Higher Criticism. It is a dangerous thing to tamper with God's plans and to undertake to reform His work. To the Catholic all the controversial effusions of the Higher

Critics against the authenticity and veracity of the Bible are causing but little concern, as those sacred records are safeguarded against all assailants by the vigilance of the Catholic Church, to whose keeping they have been confided by the divine Author who inspired them. For Catholics the ultimate foundation of faith as well as its rule, is not the individually interpreted Bible, but the divine authority of their Church. Whilst they firmly believe that the Scriptures have God as their principal author, at the same time they know full well that, according to the mind and provision of Christ, their faith is not wholly dependent on those documents. They consequently look on the attacks of unbelieving critics without experiencing the sense of the ground slipping from under their feet, which is just now the predicament of so many Protestants whether Modernists or Fundamentalists. (For additional remarks see Part VI of our Course in Vol. II.)

The Pontifical Biblical Commission, and Its Decisions on Each of the Four Gospels

202. The Pontifical Biblical Commission is a committee or assembly of cardinals at Rome, assisted by a select body of eminent biblical scholars, whose chief duty consists in safeguarding and defending the integrity of Catholic Faith in Scriptural matters. It also decides controversies on grave questions, and gives answers to Catholics throughout the world that may consult it. It was formally established by the Apostolic letter of Leo XIII, dated October 30, 1902. Its decisions or decrees, when approved by the Pope and published by his command, though not considered as specifically pontifical acts and infallible utterances, yet must be received by all who claim to be loyal Catholics, with submissive obedience and interior assent, in as much as its official pronouncements are held as a safe doctrine owing to the authority, whence they emanate.

As to the value and binding force attaching to the decrees of the Biblical Commission, the late Pontiff Pius X, in a *motu proprio,* issued November 18, 1907, declared as follows: "*All are bound in conscience* to submit themselves to its de-

crees on biblical matters in the same way as all are bound to submit to those of the Sacred Congregations when referring to doctrines, and when approved by the Supreme Pontiff. This declaration applies to the decrees already published, as well as to those which will be published in the future."

Decisions of the Pontifical Biblical Commission on each of the four Gospels.

The Gospel of St. Matthew: Matthew, the Apostle of Christ, is truly the author of the Gospel current under his name. He wrote it in the vernacular tongue, Hebrew Aramaic then in use among the Jews in Palestine, for whom the work was specially intended. It was written and published, according to St. Irenæus, before the destruction of Jerusalem between A.D. 63 and 67. (Decision approved, June 19, 1911.)

The Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke: "Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, and Luke, physician, assistant and companion of Paul, and truly the authors of the Gospels attributed to them." They both wrote in Greek, Mark between the years of our Lord 42 and 50: Luke between A.D. 50 and 63. (Decision approved, June 26, 1912.)

The Gospel of St. John: The Biblical Commission held that the arguments both from external and internal evidence prove the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel, and that its authorship is attributed to the Apostle St. John. *Moreover, to the question* whether the discourses or sermons attributed in said Gospel to our Lord, are not properly and really His own discourses but theological compositions of the writer himself, the Commission gave a negative answer. This Gospel was published in Ephesus about A.D. 97, having been composed by St. John in his extreme old age, during, or soon after his banishment to Patmos. (Decision approved, May 29, 1907.)

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PART V

CHAPTER I

DEMONSTRATION OF THE DIVINITY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

ART. I.—OBSERVATIONS AS TO THE METHOD TO BE FOLLOWED IN THIS DEMONSTRATION

204. 1. Among the most significant marks and evidences of true revelation, the Holy Fathers and Apologists, the interpreters of Christian traditions, have always placed in the first rank miracles and prophecy, which is itself a miracle of the intellectual order. They have always seen in these the undeniable testimony of God and the divine seal of approval imprinted upon the communications of Heaven to earth.

On this point the ancient and the modern foes of Christianity are in complete accord with its defenders; whilst denying the reality of miracles, unbelievers entertain no doubt as to the value of a miracle as a proof of the divine sanction, if the fact of its actual occurrence be fully established.

2. The rationalists will not agree to the use of this method; that is easily understood. As they reject all *supernatural* divine revelation, they consequently profess what is called a merely *natural* religion, the product of the human mind. This natural religion, according to them, is only a rule of morals; its precepts are beyond the domain of scientific inquiry; they hold, however, that man should observe these precepts, because man is made to live in society. If this were

true, the principal characteristic test of true religion would be morality of doctrine: this would be the supreme criterion, which every man should appreciate by the simple use of his reason. As to miracles, it goes without saying, they reject them altogether, or only retain their name. Everything that appears in the Gospels as a supernatural event, miracles, prophecies, should, in their opinion, be regarded as a figurative expression, an intimation of rights and duties; these events must be brought back as things within the range of reason, reduced to the state of natural facts. In this consist the functions of an interpreter, and this is what Kant, the first author of this theory, calls moral accommodation.

3. Even among Catholics, there was, at times, some hesitation as to the *best method* to be followed in the defense of Christian Faith. As the unbelievers of the last century had, in the name of so-called scientists and philosophers, piled up their objections and sarcasm against miracles, the defenders of religion seemed to fear that by upholding them they were placing themselves in an unsafe position and they resolved to carry the contest to a field which seemed more favorable for a successful issue. They devoted their efforts to showing forth the moral beauty of the Christian religion and the marvelous changes which it had effected. Surely, these considerations are far from being without value, and we also shall avail ourselves of them; but we must say that we see in the establishment and stability of the Christian religion a *miraculous* intervention of God, who placed the seal of His approval on the revealed Christian Faith by the performance of miracles which only omnipotent power could do.

4. It is therefore true that the right *method* to be followed is the one which the Church has always adopted: it consists in *setting forth* above all the proofs *directly* supplied by God Himself, and consequently the most effective in demonstrating the divinity of the fact of revelation, and these are *miracles* and *prophecies*. This is what Cardinal Pie, Bishop of Poitiers, says on this point: "Miracles are the true proof of the Christian religion. Neither in the person of His prophets nor in the person of His Son, did God demonstrate, by a process of

reasoning, the *truth* which He taught or the *justice* of the precepts which He gave to the world. He spoke, He commanded, and as a warrant for His doctrine, as a justification of His authority, He performed *miracles.* It is, therefore, in nowise allowable for us to abandon or weaken an order of proofs that occupy the first rank in the plan and history of Christianity, by relegating them to a secondary and much inferior position. Miracles, which belong to the order of facts, are infinitely more convincing to the mind of the multitude than all other kinds of argument; hence, it is by miracles that revealed religion imposes itself on mankind and becomes known and acceptable to them.'' (3e Instr. synod., tome V.)

To justify our line of argument, we have a still higher authority, and one which is altogether decisive. Here is the explicit declaration of the Vatican Council (1870): ''That the homage of our faith be in accord with reason, God has wished to add to the interior helps of the Holy Spirit exterior proofs of His revelation, and *particularly miracles and prophecies,* which showing evidently the omnipotence and the infinite knowledge of God, give us, as to divine revelation, signs most certain and suitable to the intelligence of every one, *divinæ revelationis signa sunt certissima et omnium intelligentiæ accommodata.''* (Constitutio de fide catholica, iii.)

We now see *why* prophecy, and especially miracles, have been attacked with so much vehemence by contemporary rationalists. It will be our task to set forth in the clearest light the irresistible strength of these proofs, which we shall accomplish more successfully by prefacing them with some preliminary philosophical notions on the nature of miracles and prophecies, and by refuting beforehand the principal objections that are raised against them.

ARTICLE II.—MIRACLES AND PROPHECY

205. Four questions present themselves for examination. I. The nature of miracles and prophecy. II. Their possibility. III. The means of verifying them and distinguishing them from natural facts. IV. Their value as proofs.

We shall, in the first paragraph, treat of these four points as they apply to miracles; we shall afterwards apply to prophecy the result of this study.

§ I. Miracles

I—Nature or Idea of Miracles

The word miracle comes from the Latin word *mirari,* to astonish. Among the marvelous effects that cause astonishment, there are some of which the causes are beyond the knowledge of some men, but which may be discovered by more perspicacious minds. Thus the cause of eclipses, a mystery to the vulgar folks, is no secret to the astronomer. This is not a miracle as we understand it in reference to our present discussion.

There are other effects of such a nature that no created being could produce them, and which require the *special* intervention of God. We say *special,* because God intervenes and concurs, as it is proved in natural theology, in *all* the actions of His creatures. That there be a miracle, it is necessary that God should make, in a particular case, an exception to the general law, which He has Himself imposed upon all created agents and forces.

A miracle thus understood may be defined: an effect which transcends all the powers of nature and requires a special intervention of God Himself. Again, there are miracles which are beyond the experience of the senses; Eucharistic transubstantiation, for instance, and the extraordinary operations of supernatural grace. Though real and true in every sense of the word, yet miracles of this kind cannot serve to prove the truth of a doctrine; for this, it is necessary to have *palpable and manifest* visible facts. It is for this reason that apologists generally prefer the following definition, which we accept in our turn: a miracle is a sensible fact which is beyond the natural powers of all the created agencies of the Universe, and which in the circumstances under which it occurs, manifestly reveals an immediate and extraordinary

intervention of divine omnipotence. We might also say a miracle is an extraordinary manifestation by God, by a sensible act, which no created agent could produce. We have given the definition of miracle properly so called. Besides the prodigies or marvels strictly divine, viz., requiring God's power to effect them, Catholic theology reckons other marvelous facts surpassing the power of man, and revealing the intervention of superior spiritual agencies to accomplish them, either angels or demons. The circumstances accompanying the performance of such feats, the purpose, and the nature or character of such prodigies enable us, at times, to determine with sufficient evidence whether they should be attributed to angels or to diabolical agents. But as it may be occasionally practically impossible, in some special case, to decide whether a given extraordinary fact surpasses the forces of angelic power and requires the immediate intervention of God Himself, it is well to bear in mind this consideration, that the prodigies wrought by the good spirits, from the point of view of apologetics, possess as proof exactly the same value and efficacy as miracles rightly so called, from the simple fact that angels cannot intervene in suspending, as to some particular fact, the ordinary course of nature, without the special permission and concurrence of the Providence of God.

The supreme importance of this subject calls for a fuller development of the concept of miracle and its several kinds or degrees.

By a miracle we mean a sensible, visible fact, contrary to the ordinary course of nature, surpassing the powers of all created beings, and wrought by God's omnipotence for a supernatural, divine purpose or end.

To constitute a true miracle four conditions are required:

(1) The fact must be accessible to man's sensible faculties.

(2) It must be something contrary to the ordinary course of nature and exceeding all created powers.

(3) It must consequently require the all-powerful intervention of God.

(4) It is performed for some spiritual or supernatural end.

Miracles are divided into three classes or degrees, all demanding God's power for their performance.

First degree.—This occurs when the fact itself is such as to exceed the whole order or power of nature. Such miracles are said to be above all nature. Examples: The sun going back ten lines on the dial of Achaz. Isaias said to King Ezechias: *This shall be a sign to Thee from the Lord.*" (38, 7, 8.) The supernatural condition of Christ's glorified body in the Transfiguration. (Matt. 17, 2.)

Second degree.—This is verified when the power of nature is exceeded by reason of the particular subject in which the miraculous effect is produced. The raising of Lazarus four days after his death (John 11, 39), and the restoration to sight of the man born blind (John ch. 9) belong to this second class, for though nature gives life and sight, yet not to the dead, or the sightless from birth. Such miracles are said to be against nature, because there resides in nature a disposition contrary to the effect which God produces, as in the case of the three Hebrew youths, who were untouched by the highly heated furnace notwithstanding the destructive power of its fire, which proved fatal to some Chaldeans. (Dan. 3, 48-50.)

Third degree.—We have miracles of this class when the power of nature is exceeded by reason of the manner in which the effect is caused. Among these miracles are reckoned all the instantaneous cures performed by Our Lord. (Luke 6, 18-19.) Medical art by the application of suitable remedies may, in the course of time, cure many diseases, but not instantaneously and by a word of command. A double miracle of this kind was worked by Our Savior, when He performed the sudden cure of the centurion's servant that was lying sick at a distant place. (Matt. 8, 13.) The surgeon may effect the union of the two ends of a broken bone, kept in proper position and at rest for a certain length of time, but he cannot, by any natural means, obtain immediate and instantaneous healing. Yet such a feat was accomplished, through the intercession of our Lady of Lourdes, in the person of Peter de Rudder, a Belgian agricultural laborer, April 6, 1875.

(See "Lecture on Miracles" by Gideon W. B. Marsh, physician and surgeon, pp. 60–66.) In fact nearly all the miraculous cures taking place at Lourdes belong to this third class of miracles. They are all called prodigies beyond or beside nature. Thus we have miracles of three different spheres equally impossible to natural forces and to all created beings, particularly if performed by a simple word of command.

II—Possibility of Miracles

206. The possibility of a miracle cannot be doubted by a reasonable man who admits the existence of God (nn. 3-24). It appeared so evident to the deist Jean-Jacques Rousseau that he expressed himself in these terms: "Can God perform miracles, that is to say, can He make exception to the laws which He has established? To treat this question seriously would be an impious act, if it were not absurd. To chastise anyone who would give a negative answer, would be doing him too much honor; he should be put in an insane asylum. But where is the man who ever denied that God could perform miracles?" The conviction of the possibility of miracles is indeed so natural to man, that, at all times and among all the peoples of the earth, such a belief prevailed. Neither the Jews nor the pagans nor the bitterest and ablest enemies of Christianity, such as Celsus, Porphyry and Julian, the Apostate, ever thought of disputing the existence of miraculous facts by objecting that the miracles, upon which Christianity is founded, were things impossible. And yet this would have been a summary and easy means of suppressing at its very birth the new religion. The modern enemies of the supernatural and of all positive religion are wiser in their generation. As they cannot *prove* the impossibility of miracles, they boldly proclaim that impossibility to be an indisputable axiom. They, therefore, take it for granted that miracles are absolutely impossible, and palm off this assertion as it were a self-evident truism needing no proof. "The principle of criticism," says Renan, "is that a miracle has no place in the scheme of human affairs." This way of arguing is convenient

enough, most assuredly, but it is far from being scientific and convincing; it too palpably betrays the total absence of arguments. There are, however, writers who endeavor to support their assertion by reasons drawn from philosophy or from the sciences. But these reasons are only apparent; we will have occasion to show how weak is the foundation which they rest upon.

Nothing can be easier than to put forth assertions such as these: "Absolute and inflexible necessity dominates nature; the law of nature is a mechanical, eternal, immutable law which identifies itself with the laws of reason itself; it is the most rigid expression of necessity, no power can escape from this necessity, which has neither exception nor restriction." The difficulty would precisely be to prove these assertions which are contrary to the inmost persuasion of mankind and to the universal and perpetual use of prayer and sacrifices among men. It is, moreover, easily seen that such a theory results in the most desolate *fatalism* and in the overthrow of all *morality*. It is certain that over and above the law of the conservation of matter and of force, there is a principle that illumines and completes it, a sovereign idea which dominates everything; the idea of *order and finality*, without which the world would only be a *mass of inexplicable facts*. It is equally certain that in the system governing the phenomena of the world, its laws might have been different from what they are (Duhamel); see de Bonniot, S.J., "Le Miracle et ses contrefaçons" (Miracles and their Counterfeits).

We must not omit to observe that the mode of proceeding adopted by the rationalist in the present question is absolutely opposed to the true scientific spirit. This spirit requires that before reaching a conclusion or making an affirmation, one must begin by observing the facts in a spirit of complete freedom from every preconceived opinion; it requires that after serious and profound observation one must sift these facts by a careful and conscientious criticism; then only will one have the right to form a conclusion. This is not the method adopted by the learned men of the materialist or even of the rationalist school. They begin by declaring that miracles are

not possible. Then, when driven to the wall by their opponents bringing forward historical facts most logically proven, or miracles performed in our day, which it is sufficient to go to see in order to witness them, these gentlemen persist in denials against all testimony and all evidence, or they refuse to concede to the facts proven any and all miraculous character, admitting that they understand nothing thereof, but persisting in saying that there cannot be a miracle because miracles are impossible.

Remark. The same motives which make of miracles the target of the attacks of contemporary rationalism, explain the fury with which it assails the dogma of *Providence,* that is, the particular intervention of God in the government of the world, and the *efficacy* of prayer, which is its necessary corollary.

THESIS.—Miracles are possible.

207. First Argument. We might confine ourselves to saying: Miracles have been performed; therefore miracles are possible. Yet, we shall prove that quite a number of sensible facts, perfectly well attested by history, could not have been produced by any created agent; that consequently, they required the extraordinary and immediate intervention of God Himself. Such being the case, anything and everything that can be said against the possibility of miracles is absolutely without any value: *ab esse ad posse valet illatio*—from the existence of a fact we can legitimately infer its possibility. And let us observe that to destroy the main objection of unbelievers and thereby to pull down the whole framework of impiety it suffices to bring forward a *single* undoubted miraculous fact, which may have taken place at any epoch of the world's existence; for, if the occurrence of even only one solitary miracle was verified in one case, there is no reason whatever for denying or doubting the possibility of a similar occurrence in any other case.

Second Argument. A miracle is possible, if nothing is opposed to it, either on the part of the creature, or on the part of God the Creator. But such is the case.

(*a*) *Creatures,* having in their being and in their manner of existence only that which they receive from God, are and remain *essentially* dependent on their Creator and absolutely subject to His sovereign will. Being subject to the general *physical* laws, which it has pleased God to establish, why should they be less subject to a special order of supernatural Providence emanating from the same God?

(*b*) God being omnipotent has created the world in complete independence; it is of His own free will that He has given and that He maintains the laws which govern it. (Ps. 148, 5.) Why should He be henceforth so bound down by His own work that He could no longer be the Master, but should be the slave? Why could He not do what every human legislator can do: determine in advance the exceptions to the law, of which He is the Author? Because God has wished, for instance, that, as a general rule, moisture and heat should be the conditions for the germination and development of plants, why should He deprive Himself of the power to cause wheat to germinate and ripen without heat or moisture? Such an assertion is simply absurd; it makes of the Creator, of the sovereign Master of the world, a kind of being purely passive, dominated by supreme necessity or fate, in a word, it denies the very existence of God by denying one of His essential attributes, an independent will. Indeed, one must be an atheist to affirm the impossibility of miracles.

208. Objections. **A.** Against these arguments, so conclusive to every right-thinking mind, what are the objections? That a miracle would be contrary to the *unchangeableness* and *wisdom* of God; in other words, that a change in the *general laws* established by God would presuppose in Him ignorance or levity, or a mutable will.

Answer. The unchangeableness or immutability of God is in nowise incompatible with a miracle, because a miracle does not suppose any change in the divine decrees. *Deus opera mutat, consilia non mutat,* says St. Augustine—God changes His works; but He does not change His decrees. It is by the same indivisible and eternal act of His will that God decrees the laws themselves as well as all the exceptions to

these laws, which may occur at a given moment. The miracle also forms a part of the divine plan. The will of God as well as His thought, embraces in the same act the past, the present and the future, the whole Universe and each of the beings which compose it. In determining the circumstances, wherein the usual operations of these laws may be suspended in a special case, God not only does not change His decrees, but He rather accomplishes and fulfills them. The objection derived from the belief in the immutability of God's decrees has no more force against the efficacy of prayer than against miracles. "We do not pray," says St. Thomas, "to change the divine plan, but to obtain the effect, the accomplishment of which was subordinated in the divine plan to the act of prayer." Listen to what is said on this subject by the great Swiss mathematician Euler (1783): "When God arranged the course of events in the world, and when He disposed all that was to happen therein, He took into account at the same time all the circumstances, which were to accompany each act, and in particular the deliberations, vows and prayers of each intelligent being, and the arrangement of all the events was made in perfect accordance with all these circumstances. Hence, when a person now addresses to God a prayer worthy of being heard, it must not be imagined that the prayer only now reaches the knowledge of God. He had known it from all eternity, and because this merciful Father judged it worthy of being heard, *He arranged the course of events in the world expressly in favor of this prayer, so that its accomplishment is a part of the natural course of events.* It is thus that God grants the prayers of the faithful without performing miracles, though there is no reason for denying that God has performed and does perform true miracles, even only for temporal favors."

It is well to remark that we cannot give the name of *miracle* to *extraordinary graces* obtained through prayer, which are the effect of physical forces arranged from the beginning by God with a view to granting the prayers which would be addressed to Him. That an abundant rain, putting an end to a long drought, be granted after public prayers,

may be a striking favor and a visible protection of Providence, but being the effect of natural agencies, it does not imply a direct and immediate action of God and does not receive the name of miracle, in the truest sense of the term.

B. The wisdom of God can no more be brought into question than His unchangeableness or immutability.

(*a*) It is for an end worthy of God that the miracle is performed. The whole order of the Universe comprises at once both the physical order and the moral order; but the physical world has, as part of its destination, to be subservient to the moral world, for the salvation of immortal souls. What can be more worthy of God than to confirm the truth of a doctrine coming from Him, or the authority of one of His envoys, or the sanctity of some of His servants, or His own Divinity, by astounding prodigies, which He alone can work? Is not a miracle eminently adapted to such purposes? Man is too familiar with the ordinary marvels of nature to perceive easily the Author of these marvels. To enable men to recognize the presence and action of the Creator, it is necessary that the Creator Himself should astound them by some striking derogation from the laws of nature, which He has appointed. Speaking of the miraculous multiplication of the loaves in the desert, St. Augustine says: "Miracles are divine works done for the purpose of raising the human mind to the knowledge of God by means of sensible, visible facts. As few persons are wont to see the truly admirable and astounding work of Providence to be observed even in a grain of wheat, God in His infinite mercy, has reserved certain things to be done at an opportune time, outside of the ordinary course and order of nature, with a view to make an impression, by this unaccustomed spectacle, upon men, whom the sight of daily occurrences would leave altogether unmoved. Assuredly it is a greater miracle to govern the whole world, and provide the needed sustenance for all mankind, than to satisfy the hunger of five thousand people with five loaves of bread; as to the first, however, no one shows admiration, whilst they marvel at the second, not that it is greater, but because it is more rare." (Tract. 24 in Joan.) As to the moral purpose of miracles,

read Bossuet's admirable "Discourse on Universal History," 2nd pt., xix, 259 (French edition).

(*b*) God in no manner resembles the workman who, after conceiving and constructing a complicated instrument, has to retouch now a wheel, then a spring or a lever, either through mere whim or to remedy some unforeseen defect. God has no need ever to retouch His work; but He needs show that He is the absolute Master of His work, to sanction the truth of His words by extraordinary and striking effects of His infinite power.

In this connection we find it important briefly to refer to the following astronomical incident. The great English mathematician, Isaac Newton, thought that possible confusion and disorder, resulting from the countless intricate movements of planets and other numerous globes of the solar system, would be prevented by the timely intervention of God, the Supreme Ruler. Laplace, the greatest astronomer of his day, took exception to that theory, as derogatory to the Creator's foresight and intelligence. He held, on the contrary, that no such intervention was needed, as all the movements of planets and starry globes, when launched into space, had been so arranged and disposed that all possible disturbances would, in the course of ages, adjust themselves; a view, which subsequent astronomers fully endorsed as more worthy of God's wisdom by excluding all imperfections in the natural order originally established by the Creator.

(*c*) Let us add, that a miracle, which is a rare and temporary exception to the general law, limited to some individual case, cannot disturb the harmony of creation, nor interfere with the study of nature and its laws. If, at the command of a wonder-worker, a man blind from birth should receive the gift of sight, if a dead man should rise from the grave, this in no way prevents nature from following its ordinary course and men from remaining subject to disease and death.

Here we deem it advisable to strengthen our argument by the following additional remarks:

The natural laws are by no means interfered with, sus-

pended, arrested or transgressed, though their effects are in some special instances modified by God's omnipotence, who doubtless can at will neutralize the action of the natural causes, which He created by His almighty power and rules with His sovereign will. In fact, how could it be otherwise? Who can consistently with reason dare assert that the Supreme Creator and omnipotent Ruler of the Universe cannot control the forces and action of His own creatures? Because, forsooth, He has become the slave of the very laws, which He Himself has established? Shall we say that He has produced a power greater than Himself, and that consequently all natural phenomena will inevitably happen, whether He wills it or not; that, if a drowning man invokes God's aid, He, though omnipotent, cannot come to his assistance and save his life? (Matt. 14, 30, 31.) God comes at times to the help of His creatures in extraordinary manner in answer to their invocations, not only because His goodness is unbounded and His mercy exhaustless, but also because He would have us understand that He is hedged in by no natural laws, that He is as free as He is good, and wishes us to feel that we owe all to His mercy; that we are immediately dependent on His love and can have recourse to Him in all our needs. The pagans, Greeks and Romans, worshipped as their supreme divinity, the Jupiter Tonans, but they identified him with fate and regarded him as incapable of any volition or free action; and modern philosophers and many so-called Christian preachers, who blindly follow them—*servum pecus*—bind the Almighty Creator with the imaginary chains of the law of nature, which they suppose to be inflexible and unalterable, not perceiving that by so doing they identify Him with the Fatum of the old heathens.

The God of the Christians is not a blind, inexorable and unbending Fate. He is infinitely good, loving, full of tenderness and compassion, who harkens to His children when they cry unto Him, and is more ready to answer than anyone is to ask. Neither is the immutability of God in any way compromised nor interfered with by the working of miracles in answer to such prayers as He, from all eternity, foresaw would be

freely offered by His creatures in a determined time. For, as Catholic philosophy teaches us, by the same eternal act by which God established the natural laws ruling the material world, He also decreed and determined the exceptions in their effects which, according to His will, were to happen at a given time and place, when the foreseen condition of worthy prayer or penitential acts would be verified. Hence, as St. Augustine tersely puts it, "God changes His works, but not His counsels" —*Deus opera sua mutat, consilia non mutat.* God's thought and will embrace in one single act the past, the present and the future, all equally clear before His all-seeing eye. Hence all miracles involving a suspension—not indeed of the natural law, but of its action regarding some particular effect wrought in answer to prayer—have been predetermined by God from all eternity, and they will occur in the appointed period of time, thus forming part of the great plan and design of His Providence in the government of the world; for, as the poet says: "Prayer moves the Hand that moves the Universe."

Divine Providence, while determining in advance the effects that are to happen in the material world around us, has also determined the order of their occurrence and the causes that are to produce them. Now, among these causes human acts hold a conspicuous place and must be taken into account. Man will perform such and such an act, say, address a prayer to the Lord, or perform some penitential act with a view to implore an extraordinary favor not obtainable from human aid, say, for instance, the healing of a naturally incurable disease or the ceasing of a pestilence, of a drought, the quelling of a storm, etc. By so doing he does not mean to change there and then the disposition of Divine Providence, or, as a certain Methodist divine supposes, "to make an assault on all God's laws of matter, mind and spirit," but he simply voluntarily fulfills what God requires, and on account of which He, from all eternity, decreed to grant the favor asked and disposed natural events accordingly. Here, while referring to the activity of the natural laws governing the material Universe, we must not overlook the holiest and sublimest of laws, and that is the law of prayer and its bear-

ing on the moral, spiritual world, the world of souls. For, in accordance with God's benevolent designs, prayer is a law, nay a power, playing a most important part in the harmony of the supernatural world. As Tennyson puts it: "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." And this law springs not from the nature of things, but rather from the will of the Supreme Lawgiver, who has established it. God then, in consequence of His foreknowledge and saving power, has regulated from all eternity both the effects and their causes; from all eternity He has resolved to grant some special favors, and He has decreed that in some particular cases prayer should be their cause and indispensable condition. From eternity He said in His paternal divine heart: At such and such epoch of time I will fertilize the arid land by copious rains; I will cure the sick, raise the dead to life, quell the raging storm, arrest the ravages of famine, pestilence and war, because at that epoch of time my children will raise to me their supplicating hands, repent of their transgressions and throw themselves into the arms of my mercy. So did God decree from the beginning; and shall we accuse Him of instability, of inconsistency, of mutability, because His eternal decrees are being faithfully fulfilled in the course of time? This charge would be supremely unjust, unreasonable and absurd. Because God is good, and merciful to His creatures even to the granting of temporal favors and material good, He does not cease to be immutable. Prayer, then, instead of disturbing the order of His government, only fulfills His eternal designs. He knows from all eternity all the free acts of His creatures, and, therefore, knows whether prayer shall be offered in such and such emergency; and if He decreed that a miraculous effect shall reward a worthy prayer, He has also foreseen that such a prayer shall be made. Therefore, as a most kind and merciful Father, whenever He grants a favor in answer to our prayers, we may justly imagine Him to say, "My son, from all eternity I had resolved to give you what you ask to-day. I was only waiting for the request that you would address to me for the benefit you wish to obtain."

III. Possibility of Ascertaining the Occurrence of a Miracle

209. There are adversaries of Christianity who, being unable to disprove and therefore reasonably to deny the possibility of miracles, pretend with Rousseau that it is at least impossible to ascertain their existence with certainty. Evidently this is endeavoring to reach the same end by another route; but this new attempt is no more happy and successful than the former. Let us prove it.

To establish fully a miracle, there are only two points to be ascertained: 1. The existence of the fact itself. 2. The miraculous character or nature of that fact. Now, we assert that in certain cases this double ascertainment is possible and even easy.

We say *in certain cases;* because in no way do we claim that *all* true miracles can be established in themselves. In fact, have we not already said above (n. 205) that certain miracles, such as Eucharistic transubstantiation, are, through their supra-sensible nature, above all experimental observation? Even as to miraculous occurrences falling under the senses, there may be cases when it would be difficult, for learned men as well as for the vulgar, to fully ascertain their nature. But the assertion of our opponents is *general; every miraculous fact,* say they, is necessarily beyond the range of our investigations.

THESIS.—THERE ARE MIRACLES OF WHICH WE CAN (1) KNOW THE EXISTENCE WITH CERTAINTY, AND (2) ASCERTAIN SCIENTIFICALLY OR PHILOSOPHICALLY THE MIRACULOUS NATURE.

210. 1. As a miracle is a sensible fact, it can be known, as all facts of that nature, either by the testimony of the senses, or by the testimony of men, provided that the latter possess the requisite qualifications. To ascertain, for instance, that a man walks on the water of the sea, that a leper is instantaneously cured, that the dead come back to life, it is evidently enough that one should have the organ of sight in a normal,

healthy condition. Did the witnesses of the resurrection of Lazarus, in order to assure themselves that his corpse had already entered into the stage of putrefaction, before he was brought back to life, require better organs than those necessary to be certain that any other man was first alive and then really dead? It must be remembered that what is to be verified by the senses is the fact itself, and not its miraculous character; the latter is to be decided by a process of reason, and it is a strictly rational conclusion.

2. There are also cases where the slightest reflection will clearly prove that a phenomenon duly established is beyond all the forces of nature in operation at the time of the occurrence. In such cases, one need not be a man of learning or a member of a scientific academy to have the right to decide that the miracle is of divine origin. Is there any man, for instance, who is not absolutely certain that the dead do not naturally return to life? And if you were told that a day will come when a man will be able *naturally,* by his word, to restore life to a corpse already in a state of decomposition, would there not arise within you against such a foolish pretension a protest stronger than all systems or theories, the protest of nature and common sense? Must one be a physician, a physiologist or a chemist, to be certain that with five loaves and two fishes (John 6, 9) it is impossible to satisfy the hunger of five thousand men; that an inveterate sore cannot disappear at a simple verbal command? If, therefore, at the word of a man speaking in the name of God, I see a man four days dead arise from the grave, it will be impossible for me to attribute this fact to any natural cause, known or unknown, because it is *diametrically opposed to laws known and certain to a supreme degree.* Yes, as long as it will not be proved that a physician can bring back the dead to life by a simple act of his will; or that the imagination alone is sufficient to instantaneously mend a fracture, restore sight to the blind, cause a tempest suddenly to subside, I shall remain assured that I am capable of ascertaining the miraculous character of an event, of which I am a witness or which is certified to me by witnesses worthy of confidence.

To pretend, as Renan had the boldness to do, that to deserve belief in its truthfulness a miracle should take place in an amphitheatre or public hall, under the eyes of the most eminent physicians, physiologists, physicists and chemists, or before a commission of specialists in several branches of knowledge, who should choose themselves the corpse to be restored to life, and determine all the details and conditions of the miraculous feat; to pretend, in fine, that God, if He wishes to be believed, should conform Himself to the caprice of these people, and, like a professional juggler, repeat at their bidding the marvelous feat, as often as they wished, this is not simply impiety, it shows that one has lost all moral sense, and is entirely devoid of the reverence due to the Deity. Moreover, were we to consider such a course as necessary, we could no longer draw up certificates of death without consulting a commission in which all the scientific bodies should be represented. In this connection, the reader familiar with the French language will read with pleasure and profit the able lecture of Rev. Fr. Félix, of the Society of Jesus, entitled "Miracle et la critique nouvelle" (Miracle and the New Criticism), Lenten Lectures, delivered at Notre-Dame de Paris in the year 1864, 2d edit., p. 173.

First Objection. It is taken from the rationalist David Hume, whose disciples maintain that it is insoluble. The following analysis will show that their view is far from the truth.

(1) He begins thus: "A miracle may be accurately defined a violation of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent."

It is not true that miracles imply a violation of a law of nature, for they are simply a suspension, or prevention of a particular effect in a particular law by the intervention of a higher force, the power of God. For instance, when the three Hebrew youths (Daniel 3, 93-94) did not suffer from being thrown by Nabuchodonosor into the highly heated furnace, did fire cease to burn elsewhere? Was the general law of combustion violated? Certainly not. In fact it burned to death the Chaldean ministers that were near the furnace.

We need not then be surprised if Hume's definition has been rejected by another rationalist, Thomas Huxley, who writes thus: "The definition of a Miracle as a violation of the law of Nature is in reality an employment of language which cannot be justified." (Essay on Hume, p. 129.)

What Hume adds to his definition "or by the interposition of some invisible agent" is another glaring blunder, for it confounds the true miracles attributed only to the Deity with feats or prodigies possible to angelic intelligences, superior indeed to human power, but not exceeding all the forces of nature.

(2) To show that no sure proof of the existence of miracles can be derived from human testimony, Hume writes. "It is more probable that human testimony should err than there should be an exception to natural laws which are unchangeable and inviolable, as established by observation. Moreover, it is more probable that men will lie than it is that Nature will go out of its course."

In the first place, it is not nature that performs the miracle by going out of its course, but Almighty God, and when He performs it, nature does not go out of its course, in other words, none of its laws are violated, as we proved above.

Our opponent next speaks of nature's laws being unchangeable as witnessed by human observation. We answer what can observation or experience of men be but human testimony, the very self-same kind of evidence, by which the miraculous is established? If men's testimony gathered from their observation and experience is, according to Hume, untrustworthy, then the very laws of nature are unreliable, as there remains no other satisfactory evidence by which to establish them.

Moreover, moral truth based on testimony is as reliable as any physical truth, though they are derived from different motives of credibility. Because of the existence of some lying historians, is all historical testimony to be rejected, even when furnished with the conditions that render it absolutely reliable?

(3) The adversary, we are dealing with, adds: "Universal testimony has established the fact that there are no excep-

tions to the Laws of Nature, and therefore no miracles, because human experience is against their occurrence." We reply, the very opposite is the truth. In fact, the records of the human race, all the world over, bear testimony to the universal belief in miracles, and to their actual occurrence. Now it is incredible that men of all nations, times and places should have conspired in deliberately alleging that which is not true.

It is equally incredible that these same people should have been deceived, illiterate and learned alike, in a matter concerning sense experience. Miracles attested by trustworthy testimony are evidence to us in the same manner and in the same degree that they were to those who witnessed them. As a striking contrast we here submit to our readers a perfectly accurate definition of miracles as gathered, not from Catholic writers, but from non-Catholic authors, quoted in the Funk and Wagnalls' "Standard Dictionary." "A miracle is an event occurring in the physical world, capable of being discerned by the bodily senses of human witnesses, transcending all the faculties of natural agencies, and possible only by the intervention of Divine power. It is a fact of such a character that can be rationally referred to no other cause, than the immediate volition of God. When accompanying a religious teacher, the miracle is designed to authenticate his divine commission, and the truth of his message."

211. Second Objection. As a miracle is an effect whose cause, according to the view of Catholic philosophers, is not supposed to reside in natural forces, it would be necessary, before proclaiming a fact as *miraculous,* that we should know all the laws and forces of nature without exception; for any one of these laws or forces which we should not know might, in certain cases unknown to the spectators, be the very cause of the effects believed to be miraculous. But no man can flatter himself that he knows all the laws and forces of nature and all the results of their possible combinations, and therefore he can never be absolutely certain of the performance of a true miracle.

Answer. 1. (*a*) This objection formulated by J. J. Rous-

seau shows that we should not proclaim the supernatural character of a fact until we have most carefully examined into all the circumstances, under which it has occurred; but it would not prove the impossibility of establishing the supernatural character of a miracle, except in the supposition that the laws of nature were to act *capriciously* and without order. Yet nothing is less capricious than these laws. On the contrary, it is the characteristic of a natural law that it always produces the same effect, when the circumstances and conditions are identical. Consequently, when it is duly proved that the circumstances are identical, and in a multitude of cases this proof is very easily obtained, we are absolutely certain that such and such a phenomenon will be naturally produced. (*b*) Being the work of infinite Wisdom, the Universe forms an harmonious whole, ruled by laws which cannot contradict or destroy each other, for if they did, disorder and chaos would be the result. Therefore, if a given fact be *manifestly contrary to a single well-known law of nature*, it is superfluous, absurd even, to seek for the explanation of the startling event in another mysterious, hidden law, whose existence is gratuitously assumed. Such explanation is to be found only in the free-will and omnipotence of God, who proclaims and asserts the intervention of His power and sovereign dominion in performing a miracle.

2. It should, moreover, be remarked that this objection *does not attain its purpose*, which is to deprive the miracles of Christ of their efficacy as proofs and thereby weaken or even entirely destroy the divine authority of the Savior. For it presupposes that each effect reputed to be miraculous might, after all, have for its cause a hidden force of nature, a force so completely unknown that it has up to this date escaped entirely the researches of the most illustrious men of science. And yet this same force, which was so much of a secret to all, was so well known to Jesus that He foresaw most accurately and announced with the fullest confidence the effect which it would produce at a given moment. (John 2, 19.) And as Jesus performed thousands of miracles, and miracles of every kind, He alone must have had an assured

knowledge of all the forces of nature and their possible combinations, which, it is said, vary in an infinite number of ways. How could such extraordinary knowledge, so unique in its kind, have been the exclusive privilege of this illiterate, humble artisan of Galilee? From what source could Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth, have drawn a knowledge so wondrously vast, so absolutely certain, but from Him who alone possesses it, God Himself? It is therefore evident that it would be only a change of miracles, and to refuse to this Man *miraculous powers* would be to concede to Him *a knowledge quite as miraculous.* (See de la Luzerne, *Dissert. sur les miracles,* Dissertation on Miracles.)

3. If, to be certain that a sensible effect is not caused by the forces of nature, it were necessary to know *all* these forces, it would follow that men have always acted with deplorable levity and *without taking into account the moral law.* At all times, for instance, men have buried the dead, yet were they certain, in the supposition of our adversaries, that these would not again come to life? Could not that hidden, unknown force, at a given moment, have revived this or that corpse, which was being buried in the ground? And, by sealing the coffins enclosing the remains of the departed, and placing them from five to six feet under ground, would they not have willfully and cruelly prevented the action of that unknown law or force supposed to be capable by itself of restoring those bodies to life? The truth is that the very men, who put forth this objection are fully convinced that the *dead* remain *dead* unless God Himself intervenes by *a miracle* to call them back to life. When a disconsolate father, even were he an academician, brings to the grave his only son, he is but too well convinced that all hope is lost, and that all natural forces, all human efforts are impotent to restore to him the beloved one, whose loss he so sadly deplores. Hence we see that to pretend that it is impossible to ascertain the occurrence of a miracle because we do not know all the forces and all the laws of nature, is to expose to ridicule and mockery all mankind and to blame them for almost all their doings; for the example we have just given may be

indefinitely multiplied. It therefore remains demonstrated that we can have a perfect knowledge of *certain* forces of nature and of their undoubted effects, without knowing *all the forces* of nature and their several possible combinations.

It may certainly happen that in the presence of certain astonishing facts we hesitate to pronounce an opinion as to their character; we must therefore be cautious when a question of miracles arises, and admit them only on good, reliable, evident proofs. But does this prove anything against the possibility and the actual occurrence of miracles? Absolutely nothing. Prudence is here required as in many other matters.

4. If it were necessary to know all the laws of nature in order to decide whether there be a miracle or not in a given case, it would be necessary to pronounce *all natural* science impossible. For the function of science is to discover and formulate the certain and constant laws of natural phenomena. Now, if this objection be valid, no one would venture to affirm that such and such phenomenon is due to any particular cause; for it might, after all, be the effect of an unknown cause; no one would dare announce that any determined phenomenon would be produced in any given circumstance, because it might be prevented by the unforeseen action of some hidden force of nature. It would therefore be impossible to formulate any law of nature. And yet we see physiologists, chemists, physicists, astronomers formulate such laws with full confidence, though they do not know *all* the powers of nature. And it is with a confidence quite as legitimate that we affirm that the resurrection of the dead is a miracle, because, without knowing all the laws of nature, we are certain that a corpse cannot and does not *naturally* return to life. To pronounce that any particular moral law has been violated it is not necessary to be a Blackstone in jurisprudence and to know the complete collection of the criminal code. To clinch the argument, we deem it advisable to add the following remarks:

When rationalists tell us we can never determine with certainty whether a given extraordinary event, styled a mir-

acle, may not, after all, be a natural result or effect of those hidden forces, which may be discovered hereafter, we answer: There are two ways of knowing the forces of nature, namely, either *positively* or *negatively*. We know them *positively*, when we can grasp the whole extent of their power and foretell all the particular effects that they may be able to produce. This knowledge is doubtless beyond our reach, at least in the present life. Hence we read in the inspired book of Ecclesiastes: *"God hath made all things good in their* (men's) *time, and hath delivered the world to their consideration, so that man cannot find out the work which God hath made from the beginning to the end."* (3, 11.)

We know the forces of nature *negatively*, when, though we cannot tell in particular all the effects they produce, yet we can say with certainty what effects they *cannot* produce. Thus, I know for certain that San Jose is in California, though I may not know exactly the boundary line that separates this State from Arizona or Nevada. Now, in order to ascertain whether a given effect is to be attributed to the forces of nature, it is enough to know the limits beyond which they cannot pass, though we may not be able to determine positively and in detail all the effects that may be produced by the same forces. In other words, it is sufficient to know that the prodigious fact in question is opposed to some universally admitted law of nature. Thus, for instance, as we read in the Gospel (John 9), Christ cured the man born blind in the following manner: He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and He spread the clay upon his eyes and said to him: *"Go, wash in the pool of Siloa";* he went and washed and came seeing. The essence of this miracle consists precisely in this, that the means employed in performing it, such as spittle, clay and common water, do not possess the natural virtue and power of giving sight to a man born blind, though we certainly do not know all the forces inherent to those natural agents. If the infidels persist in maintaining that those substances do possess such power, let them try to produce a similar result through it, and we shall see what they

can do. And as we know now a good deal more about natural forces and laws than was known 1900 years ago, they have, of course, a far better prospect of success.

The same is to be said of the resurrection of Lazarus (John 11), who, after having been four days dead, was suddenly restored to life by these words of Christ: "*Lazarus, come forth.*" It is not necessary to know all the laws of sound, all the achievements of which the human voice is capable, or to master all the natural sciences and much less to know all the hidden forces of nature in order to be able to assert that some few articulate sounds, passing through the air, do not possess the power of restoring a decaying organism, of calling back the principle of life and uniting it again to the body, from which it was separated.

5. At all events, it must be admitted that the objection now under consideration is founded on *an error concerning the nature and true conception of certitude.* As we have already said (n. 147) there are different ways of arriving at certainty. Some truths shine forth with such intrinsic evidence that they compel *irresistibly* the *assent* of the mind and exclude the *possibility* of doubt. Miracles, being sensible facts, are not susceptible of this kind of certitude, but they may be invested with evidence so clear as to render doubt absolutely *unreasonable,* an evidence, with which all men are completely satisfied, even in the most important concerns of life; an evidence in fine, which learned men deem amply sufficient for formulating the laws of science. The reader might profitably consult the work of Ollé-Laprune entitled "De la certitude morale" (On Moral Certitude), especially ch. i, ii and vii. He shall there see the important part which the will plays in the question of certitude (nn. 147–148). The cultured reader will peruse with profit the able essay of Rev. Henry Sebastian Bowden of the Oratory prefixed to Hettinger, "Natural Religion.

212. Remarks. 1. It is possible to distinguish true miracles from illusions or prodigies, of which the devil may be the author. The following observations will convince us of this.

(*a*) Whatever may be the natural faculties with which the devil is endowed, qualities, of which his fall did not deprive him, it is certain that this enemy of God can do nothing without the *permission* of the Lord, the Sovereign Master of all creatures. Now the truthfulness, the goodness and the holiness of God could not permit this fallen angel to mimic the divine works to the extent of inducing man invincibly and inevitably into error and impelling him to his eternal ruin. We say *invincibly and inevitably,* because God, having made man a rational free being, does not dispense him from the obligation of using his reason to guard himself from illusions.

(*b*) There are certain marks or characteristics, positive as well as negative, which enable men to distinguish true miracles, namely those performed by divine power, from wonders performed by the devil. If, for instance, the marvelous thing is done in the name of God, or if it had been predicted by a true prophecy, or if it occurs in confirmation of a doctrine, fitted in every respect to make men serve God more faithfully, etc., such a prodigy evidently cannot come from the devil. On the contrary, if the effect of the wonder is opposed to the severe prescriptions of virtue and honesty or is calculated to sanction and approve an immoral doctrine, it cannot be attributed to God, the source of all holiness. The suspicious character of the agents made use of by the infernal spirit to perform these wonders, the dishonorable, undignified and grotesque means, which they habitually employ, are amply sufficient to enable people to trace to the right source, without difficulty, the origin of these wonders.

(*c*) One thing more particularly beyond doubt is that the devil cannot have been the author of the miracles performed *by Jesus Christ* and His Apostles, for their object was to destroy his empire, and Satan is not likely to combat himself. (Matt. 12, 25–26.)

(*d*) There are, besides, marvelous facts, called miracles of the first order, which are beyond the powers of *all* created beings, visible or *invisible,* and which absolutely require the

immediate intervention of God Himself, for instance, the *resurrection of the dead.* Now such facts are not wanting in the Gospels.

213. 2. *Outside of Christianity* certain surprising facts are related, which would seem, at first sight, to require divine intervention. Such are, during pagan times, the deeds attributed to Vespasian, Esculapius, Serapis, Apollonius of Thyene, and in times nearer our own, the magical wonders narrated in the accounts of Catholic missionaries in the far East, and those of the *Convulsionnaires* that flocked to the tomb of the Jansenist deacon Paris. But in all these strange events, mixed up with illusion and imposture and often of doubtful morality, the superhuman part, if there were any, is so slight, that it would require only the intervention of any spiritual being whatever for its performance. At all events, there can be no analogy between these events, ambiguous and dubious at the best, and the numerous and wonderful miracles narrated in the Gospels. What human feat or wonder can be compared, for instance, with the multiplication of the loaves, the resurrection of Lazarus, the curing of the blind, the walking on the waters, the calming of the tempest? The works of Jesus Christ have all the same character of divine force, full of simplicity and revealing exceeding bounty. There is in them nothing fantastic or capricious, nothing that betrays self-conceit or ostentation, nothing that displays any intention to astonish the spectators or to inspire terror on the beholders. We should not forget that the Gospel's miracles have a close and necessary connection with the admirable dogmatic and moral teaching of the Savior, whilst the wonders, with which the legends concerning some men have been embellished, have very seldom any connection with their doctrinal teaching, whatever it be.

3. We shall say nothing of table-turning, nor in general, of the phenomena attributed in our day to spiritism, a gross superstition revived from rank paganism. We shall only remark, as eminent authors have done, that though in these there is often nothing but feats of trickery and sleight-of-hand, there are, however, many extraordinary facts so well

proven that no reasonable doubt can be entertained about them. But it is not less certain that spiritism is a shameful and morally dangerous superstition. Mgr. d'Annibale, in the second volume of his "Moral Theology," referring to the history of table-turning and the practice of American spiritism, relates the principal facts and concludes in these terms: "They who amuse themselves with these performances, flatter themselves that these spirits are none other than the souls of the dead. In this, they are altogether wrong, for they are the demons. St. Augustine and St. John Chrysostom are of that opinion; the pagans themselves, the heathen philosopher, Porphyry, for instance, have recognized and acknowledged it; one must be bereft of reason to doubt it." Here we are reminded of the saying of St. Peter Chrysologus: "*Qui iocari voluerit cum diabolo non poterit gaudere cum Christo*"—he that plays with the devil shall not rejoice with Christ. See Part IX, ch. 4, Spiritism.

The reader can consult on this subject the "Moral Theology" of Gury-Ballerini, 3rd edition, 1874, vol. 1, nn. 273, etc.; that of Father Lehmkuhl, vol. 1, nn. 359, etc., 2d edition, 1885. He will also find a great number of excellent observations concerning spiritism in the work of Fr. de Bonniot, S. J., entitled "Le Miracle et ses contrefaçons" (Miracles and their Counterfeits), 2d part, ch. 2 to 5.

4. This would be the place to speak of the extraordinary things which occur during *hypnotic sleep,* and in particular of the cures supposed to have been obtained through the so-called process of *suggestion* or otherwise; but the matter does not appear to us to be advanced enough, from the point of view of science, to permit us to enter into a lengthy examination of the subject. Moreover, a few remarks will be enough to remove all difficulty on this score. It is certain that no trace whatever of hypnotic methods can be found in the cures performed by Jesus Christ in a countless number of diseases of every kind. The Savior has, moreover, performed a great number of other miracles of such a nature that there was *no possible occasion* for the application of hypnotism, especially in the multiplication of the loaves, the calming

of the tempest, and the resurrection of the dead. Now, these miracles alone are in themselves more than sufficient to prove the divinity of Christ's mission.

5. Some additional remarks on the subject referred to in the preceding paragraph may prove instructive to the reader. *Hypnotism,* taken in its most general and comprehensive meaning, may be defined to be an abnormal mental and physical condition, or a form of sleep brought on by artificial means, during which there is an unusual suspension of nerve powers of sense and of mind, and an uncommon activity of others. The hypnotic state is artificially induced generally by concentrating the attention of the persons to be hypnotized upon some bright object of vision, or upon the operator himself, who produces the desired effect by making a few light passes with his hands. Hence hypnotism may be truly regarded as an artificial catalepsy, which is a sudden suspension of sensation and volition, while the action of the heart and lungs continues. The editor of the *American Ecclesiastical Review* (January, 1901, p. 78), alluding to the dangers of hypnotism, both moral and physical, says: "We have frequently explained in our *Review* the risk, which the use of hypnotic experiments involves, even when applied as a therapeutic agent in disease, where it has been considered in a measure legitimate from the moral standpoint, just as ether, chloroform and similar anæsthetics. It is a danger, which has a permanent noxious effect and the injuries resulting from it cannot be repaired.

"Several of our principal medical journals have recently again discussed the subject, and they comment on a communication originally printed in the *International Journal of Surgery* and from the pen of a noted physician, Dr. Robert T. Morris of New York, who has had exceptional experience in the use of hypnotism as a therapeutic agency, and who had made a careful preliminary study of its effects before operating with its aid.

"Dr. Morris states his belief that the use of hypnotism in medical practice requires more caution than the administering of chloroform or similar anæsthetics. It has a tendency

to weaken the subject's resistance to external impressions for a long time—it may be permanently; and the incautious hypnotizer may be the cause of a serious impairing of the will faculty. He cites his experience with patients whom he met later in the social circle, and in whom he observed the sad effects of the use of hypnotism during disease."

We quote a paragraph, commenting on the above communication, from the organ of the Medical Association of Philadelphia, which sufficiently emphasizes the danger alluded to:

"There are probably many conscientious physicians whose experience has been similar to that of Dr. Morris, and who have, like him, practically abandoned the use of hypnotism. The pathologic subjection of the will by this agency is a real peril; it may seriously affect the future of the patient, and the chance of this danger, even though it may be a remote one, should be seriously considered. The possibility of inconvenience to the hypnotizer is also a real one, but is a secondary matter. Hypnotism is, as Dr. Morris says, 'a dangerous resource,' and its reckless use and recommendation by enthusiasts and injudicious operators is a matter to be deplored and discouraged by the medical profession. It has really very little value in it to the medical practitioner, but it will always be a method of the charlatan and the impostor, hence its associations are neither agreeable nor beneficial. Even the legitimate use of *suggestion* has its possible dangers, though they are comparatively insignificant; but those of full-fledged hypnotism are real and more than merely possible, they are probable in a certain class of cases. The therapeutic value of its methods is at best limited to very special cases, in which they should be employed only with the greatest circumspection. Because they have been used and recommended by a few high authorities, this does not alter the fact that the result of any extensive adoption of them would probably be only the useless production of a lot of more or less damaged brains."

6. There is, however, another phase of hypnotism, the use of which, as being radically dishonest and superstitious,

can never be justified and has deservedly provoked the condemnation of both ecclesiastical and civil authorities. It is that which is identified with magnetism, mesmerism and spiritism, as it exhibits preternatural phenomena, that cannot be attributed either to human agency or to the forces of nature, but are the result of diabolical intervention. This is the verdict of distinguished physicians, such as Lapponi, Richer, Bernheim, Mosso, Rummo, Morselli, Guermonprez and Conca, the last of whom says plainly: "We make no distinction between magnetism and hypnotism."

7. Hence the arguments alleged in condemnation of magnetism and spiritism and the prohibitory measures officially issued by the Catholic Church (June 23, 1840; March 30, 1898; July 26, 1899; April 24, 1917), and civil legislation are, for all intents and purposes, applicable to the superstitious use or rather abuse of the new fad palmed off as a recent medical discovery, the panacea destined to cure all diseases and ills that man's organism is heir to.

8. Neither can the extraordinary, preternatural phenomena resulting from the practice of hypnotism, mesmerism and spiritism weaken or invalidate, in the least, the efficacy of true miracles as proofs of divine intervention. For God's Providence will never allow the evil spirits, to whom those non-natural prodigies must be attributed, to perform strange feats in confirmation of false doctrines, when those who witness them, are unable to detect the fraud. Moreover, the circumstances that accompany the working of the preternatural wonders here referred to, show plainly that God cannot be looked upon as their author, nor as sanctioning them. For it is the evil spirit that causes the phenomena, indicating the action of an intelligent agency, and he makes use of them to deceive mankind, and destroy their belief in divine faith. They are, in fact, performed for the sake of paltry gain; they often have an openly immoral tendency; they aim only at feeding a morbid curiosity, and finally they are the means of uprooting Christian belief and of establishing in its stead false and injurious doctrines. Hence, the whole practice of mesmerism, magnetism and spiritism with which

the phenomena of hypnotism are identified, is to be branded as injurious and detestable. A classical standard work on this subject has been lately published in Rome by Rev. J. J. Franco, of the Society of Jesus, entitled "L'Ipnotismo tornato di moda" (The New Fashioned Hypnotism), in which the author discusses the whole question most thoroughly and confirms the reprobation of its practice with the testimony of the best medical authorities, both of the old and of the new world. An English version of this work is quite desirable.

9. In the *Review,* conducted by Arthur Preuss (April 10, 1902, p. 217) there appeared an excellent article on hypnotism, from which we quote a few extracts, a fitting conclusion, we think, to our brief treatment of the subject. P. Rissart has lately published at Paderborn, Germany, a study of hypnotism, its development and import in the light of present day research. In his essay he asks and answers these five questions:

(1) Can a hypnotized subject be injured by hypnotism?
(2) Can he be made the victim of a crime?
(3) Can he be made the will-less tool of a criminal?
(4) Is a hypnotized person to be considered responsible?
(5) Ought hypnotism to be forbidden?

The first question is to be answered in the affirmative. Even Wundt, who is very liberal in his views, demands that only scientifically trained physicians be permitted to practise hypnotism.

Secondly, that a hypnotic subject can be made the victim of a crime, is conceded by all authorities. When a person is a helpless automaton in the hands of another, he can easily be imposed upon in different ways, robbed, be induced to will his property away, etc.

The third question must also be answered affirmatively. A clever operator could not only induce a subject to commit theft or murder or any other crime, but he could get others to bear false witness thus endangering the welfare of society.

The question whether a hypnotized subject is responsible, must be answered negatively, both from the legal point of view and from that of Christian morals. There can be no responsibility where the will is not free; except, of course,

when the person subjecting himself to hypnotic treatment is sufficiently aware of its superstitious character and moral dangers.

Should the practice of hypnotism be forbidden?

Rissart agrees with Schultze, Wundt, Schütz, and a number of other authorities that it should. He goes so far as to advocate the absolute prohibition of hypnotic experiments, even scientific, except where an experienced and conscientious physician has good reasons to think that he can by means of suggestion thoroughly and permanently cure a disease which causes the patient greater suffering and injury than would probably result from the application of hypnotism as a remedy.

The reader can consult on this question of hypnotism *America,* for Nov. 24, 1923.

IV—The Value of Miracles as Proofs

214. A miracle is an authentic confirmation of the doctrine in support of which it is performed. For:

1. (*a*) A miracle is an exception to or derogation from the laws and powers of nature regarding some special case, fact or event: it cannot therefore have any other *efficient cause than God,* the absolute Master of nature, the framer of its laws and the Author of its forces. Now, it is plain that God cannot place His omnipotence at the service of error, fraud, or impostures. When, therefore, a man presents a doctrine as coming from God, and he supports it by working a true miracle, it is God Himself that confirms this doctrine with the seal of His authority. Hence such a man cannot be an impostor, and the doctrine which he teaches must necessarily be true. It is in this sense that St. Augustine says: "A miracle makes authority palpable, and authority commands faith." (John 9, 31.)

(*b*) Other marvelous effects or prodigies, which do not necessarily require the intervention of divine omnipotence for their performance, but which present themselves to us furnished with ample evidence of originating from the action

of a good spirit, can be said to possess real value as miracles, and may be adduced as proofs. In fact, the good angels never intervene to perform an extraordinary effect within their power without the permission and concurrence of Almighty God. Their action then in such cases is practically equivalent to the intervention of God Himself.

2. It is, moreover, *the conviction and belief of all peoples* that miracles prove the divinity of a religious doctrine, and the heavenly authority or mission of the messengers that announce it. When an assured miracle is wrought to confirm such mission or doctrine, man, unless blinded by prejudice or passion, hesitates no longer to accept it as true, because he feels instinctively and is firmly convinced that the miracle comes from God, and constitutes the divine seal or stamp sanctioning the truth of the revealed doctrine in whose behalf the miracle was wrought.

In our discussion of miracles our special aim has been to establish their reality, particularly with a view to their application as evidence of divine truth. Not all the miracles, however, are evidential, that is intended to witness to the truth of revelation in general or of Christian doctrine in particular. Some miracles may merely have been intended to confer some benefit on individual persons, or may be worked among people who profess Mohammedanism, Buddhism, or any other form of religion; but it would be no necessary testimony to the truth of these creeds themselves. But when we consider miracles as testifying to the truth of a doctrine, we know for certain that Almighty God, essential Truth, will work them exclusively in behalf of the religion which He approves. They accredit the miracle-worker, establish his authority and credibility, when they are such as can be performed only by the finger of God. They mark a person as entrusted with a divine mission, and thus confirm the truth of his teaching as conveying God's own revelation. If then a man declares himself to be invested with authority to announce a supernatural doctrine to his fellow-men, and in testimony of his divine mission appeals to miracles worked through his instrumentality, or in answer to his prayers, the

argument thus provided is irresistible. God by granting the miracle sets His seal to the words of His servant, and makes Himself a witness to the truth of his teaching and the divine origin of the message. Thus a messenger, one St. Francis Xavier, S. J., announces to the pagans of India or Japan that his message, the Catholic doctrine he is preaching to them, is from God, and he declares that they should know it to be from Him by His raising a dead man to life. God works the miracle and St. Francis Xavier's message is thereby shown to be true and divine. The miracles of our Savior were precisely of this character. No better proof of the evidential purpose of miracles can be adduced than that exhibited by Christ in His Gospel. Before He raised Lazarus from the dead, He thus spoke before the assembled multitude: "*Father, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast heard me . . . but because of the people who stand about have I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent me.*" (John 11, 41–42.)

As history testifies, no well-established miracle has ever been performed on behalf of any schismatic or any Protestant Church, and this for the best of reasons, for no erroneous doctrines can be sanctioned by God, who can bear witness only to the truth. An opposite attitude on the part of God is absolutely impossible, for it would lead people into invincible error, and render impossible their conversion to religious truth.

§ II. Prophecy

I—Its Nature

215. Prophecy consists in announcing in advance and in an assured manner actions which depend on the free determination either of God or of man. It may be defined: The certain prediction of a future event, which cannot be known through natural causes by any created intelligence. The predictions of an astronomer, who foretells an eclipse, that of a statesman who foresees a political change, are not prophecies, because they are deductions from natural causes, which may be known to man.

Its very definition shows that a prophecy is itself a kind of miracle. Hence God has made use of prophecy as one of the principal authentic signs or marks of divine revelation. Like miracles properly so called, prophecy duly fulfilled is an evidence of divine intervention accessible to the intelligence of all, and bearing an undeniable mark of divine truth. (St. Thomas, II-II, q. 171, a. 6.)

II—The Possibility of Prophecy

216. Prophecy is possible, but to God alone. That the foretelling future events is the exclusive attribute of the Deity, is made apparent from the following inspired words of the Prophet Isaias: "*Let them come, and tell us all things that are to come. . . . Show the things that are to come hereafter: and we shall know that ye are gods.*" (41, 22–23.) It is evident that no creatures restricted to the mere powers of reason can know with certainty future events. God, on the contrary, Infinite Intelligence as He is, necessarily *knows* everything that ever will be; He knows the future deliberations of free causes, such as the will of man, as well as the future results of all natural causes, even of those which do not as yet exist. Now, it is evident that what He knows He can reveal to man. He can therefore foretell all coming events. In other words, prophecies are possible to Him (n. 44).

III—The Value of Prophecies as Proofs

217. A prophecy fulfilled is a certain irresistible proof of the divinity of the revelation, in support of which it has been uttered and actually verified. For:

1. It constitutes a true miracle, and consequently, it possesses the same demonstrative force that is rightly attributed to a miracle.

2. Prophecy is possible only to God; it is, therefore, a kind of *divine revelation,* and as God cannot confirm error by any of His acts, it follows that a doctrine, of which prophecy forms an integral part, must also come from God.

3. Hence all the peoples of the earth have accepted prophecy as a proof coming from God: therefore, as history shows, all mankind have invariably recognized prophecy as a clear, undeniable evidence of divine truth. People easily understand that if a prophecy could ever be used to confirm a falsehood, it would then be necessary to accuse God Himself of leading men into error, a suggestion as blasphemous as it is absurd.

The definition of prophecy given above shows that foretelling the future is evidently an intellectual miracle, one of the most authentic signs of divine revelation. Before a prophecy is to be accepted as a divine evidence of truth, three conditions must be fulfilled:

(1) The predicted event must really have been announced in an authentic prophecy;

(2) The event must have been verified in the precise manner predicted;

(3) It must have been impossible for the realization of such event to have been known naturally to any created intelligence.

By miracles and prophecies then, as external, visible manifested signs of supernatural knowledge and power, the fact that God has intervened and spoken is announced plainly to all men, and the refusal to recognize them creates an insuperable barrier between their soul and the Creator and makes unbelievers absolutely inexcusable both before the tribunal of reason and that of God.

However great the privilege enjoyed by our Savior's contemporaries of seeing Him face to face, yet we have in the fulfillment of prophecies evidence of His divinity, which they, of course, could not possess. In this respect we see what they did not, an additional argument justifying our meritorious faith. There is obviously this distinction to be borne in mind. Miracles, as soon as performed, are available for the confirmation of truth: whilst prophecies can be advanced as proofs only after their fulfillment.

Basing our arguments upon the principles that we have hitherto developed and upon the testimonies drawn both from the Old Testament and the Gospels, whose historical authority is placed above all controversy (n. 189), we shall now proceed to the consideration of the main essential purpose of Part V of our Treatise, the demonstration of the divinity of Christ's mission and consequently of the religion, which He came to reveal to men in this world.

Remarks: Before beginning the next chapter we deem it advisable to add the following preliminary observations adapted from the "Abridged Course of Religious Instruction," by the Rev. Fr. F. X. Schouppe of the Society of Jesus.

1. The apologetic part of religion defends what is true against all adversaries, be they unbelievers or heretics of whatever denomination. It comprises, therefore, two distinct arguments: namely the truth of *Revealed and Christian* Religion as opposed to any form of unbelief, and the truth of the *Catholic* religion as opposed to the heresies of various sects.

2. The argument in defense of true Religion aims at a three-fold object, viz., (*a*) to confirm in the truth those who already possess it by disclosing to them the strong and immovable foundations on which their belief rests. (*b*) To confound the ungodly and defend the Faith against their attacks. (*c*) To enlighten those who are ignorant but seek the truth with sincere, earnest minds.

3. These several purposes are accomplished by three kinds of demonstration, suited to the different degrees of intelligence.

4. The first is a *direct* but *summary, compendious* demonstration. The second is also a *direct* but *complete, thorough* demonstration. The third is an *indirect* demonstration.

5. The *direct summary* demonstration is the popular one, as it is within the reach of the multitudes, and is based on the great fact of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Founder of Christianity, and may be summed up in the following propositions: If Jesus Christ is truly risen from the dead,

He is truly the Son of God, and His doctrine is consequently divine. Now, it is proved that He truly rose from the dead by His own inherent power; hence the conclusion is inevitable: He is truly the Son of God, and the Religion He founded is divine. The full development of this demonstration is contained in the subsequent paragraphs (221-231).

6. The *complete, direct* demonstration is that which proves the true religion in a rigorous manner, and in all its parts, basing its reasoning process on some evident, undeniable principles, and then deducting, as it proceeds, the logical conclusions. This is exactly the object of our Apologetic Course, which is directed to demonstrate: 1st—That man must profess a *Religion;* 2nd—That in the present order of Providence he is bound to embrace the *Revealed* religion; 3rd—That the only Revealed Religion is the Christian; 4th—That the genuine Christian Religion is identical with Catholicity, and essentially distinct from all dissenting sects.

7. We understand by the *indirect* demonstration a simple reference or appeal to the authorized expounders of Revealed Faith, the doctors of theology and their writings, and more particularly the dogmatic teaching of the Catholic Church, recognized as a divine institution commissioned to speak to men in God's name.

8. In order to appreciate the force and usefulness of such indirect proof, it is to be remarked that scientific demonstrations are not within the reach of every person. The Faithful are perfectly aware of the truth of their Faith; but only those well versed in religious science, such as priests and learned laymen, can expound it and answer the objections raised against it. And it is precisely to such that the mass of the faithful can always refer their opponents. And this reference, or appeal to authority, either verbally expounded or contained in written books, renders all men capable of demonstrating the truth. Thus every individual among the faithful, when attacked in his belief, can answer his adversaries in such words as these: "My friends, the truth of the Faith which the Church founded by Christ teaches, is beyond doubt. I have, thank God, the happiness of knowing this

truth; but if I am not sufficiently learned to furnish all the proofs and explanations that you demand, I know that complete and rigorous demonstrations have been given by most learned men from the time of the Apostles to our own days. These demonstrations exist in substance in all books of theology duly authorized. Study these books, or apply to the priests and doctors versed in these matters, and all your difficulties will be solved. If you honestly seek the truth, you will not refuse to look for light where you are sure to find it. Let your mind be humble, your life pure, and Christ, the light that illumines every man that comes into this world, will not fail to enlighten you and bring you from the shadow of error to the brightness of visible, divine truth." It is true that all Catholics should know their Catechism and endeavor to retain what they have learned and also to improve their knowledge by attending church regularly, listening to the sermons and instructions, and by reading Catholic books and subscribing to Catholic journals, magazines, etc. Those, however, who have the leisure, the ability, and the means ought to strive to increase their knowledge of our holy religion so as to become more and more confirmed in their Faith, which, on account of their social position, they may see more frequently attacked. It may be asked: What about our lay people, laborers, workers in factories, mothers of families, business men, clerks, or even professional men, such as doctors, lawyers, etc.? Are they bound to make such a study of our religion as would fit them to defend it against all assailants, and to solve all the difficulties raised by our opponents? No, by no means. First of all, in the majority of cases, such a study would be practically impossible: and, even when possible, there is no obligation to undertake it. Divine Providence has adopted a far wiser plan. A special class of men are set aside for that task; the members of the teaching Church, the members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, who, consecrated to the service of God and of His Church, are the divinely appointed religious teachers of men. On this account, one of their chief duties is the study of the Faith, and its explanation and defense. The grace of vocation is the

surest guarantee of the heavenly help they need to discharge those obligations with success. Hence the reason why the Lord thus speaks through His prophet Malachias: *"The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge and they* (the people) *shall seek the law at his mouth: because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts."* (Mal. 2, 7.) Neither must we overlook the fact that it is to His ministers that Christ made the solemn promise of divine assistance, particularly when they should be summoned before the civil magistrates to justify their preaching of His Gospel. *"I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist or gainsay."* (Luke 21, 15.)

CHAPTER II

PROOFS OF THE DIVINITY OF THE MISSION OF JESUS CHRIST AND OF HIS WORK, THE FOUNDING OR ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

§ I. First Proof

The Miracles Performed by Jesus Christ

218. 1. Number of the Miracles, which He Wrought. There is scarcely a page of the four Gospels that does not give an account of one or more miracles performed by Jesus Christ. He there appears truly as the *Sovereign Master of nature.* The infirm and sick of every kind are brought to Him not only from different parts of Judea, but also from Syria and the neighboring countries. Jesus cures them by a simple word, either by the imposition of hands or by the touch of His garments, or even at a distance by a secret power, which emanated from Him. (Matt. 4; Luke 6.) He changes water into wine, fills the nets with a prodigious number of fish, walks upon the waters, instantly quells the storm and calms the winds and the waves of the sea, gives sight to the blind, cures the lepers, frees the possessed from the devil,

brings the dead back to life. And yet the writers of the Gospels mention only the facts most remarkable for their splendor or on account of the circumstances accompanying them, and they evidently lead us to suppose the occurrence of a large number of other miracles implied in the general statement of St. John's Gospel (21, 25; Luke 7, 22).

Among the many miracles which they relate in detail, and which would be enough to make the life of Jesus the most astonishing biography that was ever written, we shall mention in particular:

A. *The curing of the paralytic* (Matt. 9; Luke 5), which had as witnesses unfriendly, prejudiced observers, the Pharisees and doctors of the law. The crowd present was so great that they could not bring the man into the house to lay him before Jesus, and they were compelled to go up to the roof and let him down through an opening of the tiles. It is well known that in the East the roofs are terraces, with openings into the interior part of the house.

B. *The two-fold miraculous multiplication of the loaves,* at different times, a prodigy, which acquired great force from the overwhelming testimony of the thousands of persons, whom Jesus fed on both occasions in the desert with a few loaves and fishes, the remnants or fragments left over each time filling several baskets. (Matt. 14 and 15; John 6.)

C. *The curing of the man blind from birth,* so admirably related by St. John (9). This astounding miracle is all the better proven from the fact that the Pharisees did all they could in their attempt to contradict it, and they went so far as to hold a veritable official investigation about it in order to assure themselves beyond all doubt that the witnesses were not in error.

D. *Several resurrections of the dead.* The number must have been considerable, if we judge from the answer of Jesus to the disciples of St. John the Baptist. (Matt. 11, 5.) We see that the language He used naturally leads us to believe that the risen dead were perhaps as numerous as the sick cured: *"The blind see . . . the dead rise again."* The Gospel specially tells of the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus,

for whose burial preparations were being made (Matt. 9, 18; Mark 5; Luke 8); that of the son of the widow Naim, who was already being carried to the grave, and who was restored to life by that sovereign imperative order of Jesus: *"Young man, I say to thee, arise"* (Luke 7, 14); and finally that of Lazarus, the most remarkable of all. Jesus was far away from Bethania. He arrived there only after His friend, four days dead, had been already buried in his grave, because of the evident signs of putrefaction that had already set in: *"Domine, jam fœtet,"* Lord, by this time, he stinketh. (John 11, 39.) In the presence of a great number of witnesses belonging to the upper and educated class, mostly hostile to the Savior, Jesus said: *"Lazarus, come forth,"* and presently he, that had been dead, came forth, bound feet and hands, with winding bands, and his face wrapped up in a napkin, so that he had to be freed from these bonds before he could walk; and Jesus said: *"Loose him and let him go."*

219. II. Notable Circumstances Concerning these Miracles. 1. These miracles, as well as a great number of others, are perfectly well authenticated, for they were performed in the full light of the day, in presence of *large multitudes,* coming from all parts of Judea and the neighboring countries to witness these wonders and to obtain the curing of the sick; in the presence of the *bitterest enemies* of Christ, the Pharisees and the doctors of the law, shrewd men, fully capable of detecting the least fraud and exposing any imposture, that might have been practiced on the people.

2. These miracles were *so palpable and so astounding,* that simple and illiterate persons, as well as the learned and cultured classes, could easily discover and appreciate their miraculous character. To do this it was only necessary to have eyes and ears and an upright mind. Some of these miracles, as the resurrection of the dead, the restoration of sight to the blind from birth, displayed most clearly in themselves their miraculous character; others did so by the circumstances attending them, such as cures instantaneously effected by a spoken word, a simple touch, or even at a distance. (Matt. 8, 13; 15, 28.)

3. And here let us remark that, if these miraculous facts performed in broad daylight, and so often repeated, were not real, how did it happen that belief in Christ and confidence in the truth of His divine mission went on continually increasing? Would the people have continued for more than three years to bring to Him the lepers, the blind, the deaf, the paralytic, the possessed, if these unfortunate creatures had not really felt the effects of His benevolent powers?

4. *For more than nineteen hundred years,* these miracles have been analyzed, studied and sifted in a most searching and critical diligence by Christians as well as by unbelievers, Jews and Pagans; but their truth has always emerged triumphant from the ordeal, and they have thus obtained *a greater and more permanent assent* than any belief has ever been able to secure in this world. As to the explanations, which rationalists have attempted to give of them in order to destroy their miraculous character, they are generally so ridiculous and so contemptible that they rather constitute an additional striking proof of the utter inability of those men to banish the ideas and principles of the supernatural world.

If all this is not admitted as sufficient to establish the authenticity or actual occurrence of a given fact, nothing else remains for us to do than to cast ourselves blindly into an absolute skepticism as to all matters bearing the evidence of undeniable historical truth.

220. Conclusion. Miracles then, as we have seen, are for the man who proclaims himself to be the envoy of God, the credential papers which authorize and accredit him before the world as a heaven-sent Messenger of the Lord. But Jesus Christ *ceased* not to perform miracles, any more than He ceased to proclaim Himself God's ambassador, appointed to announce to mankind the way of salvation. Even the miracles, which He was constantly performing for the solace of human suffering, prove His divine mission. He who thus disposes of God's omnipotence, who gives commands to nature as a master, must have been commissioned by God Himself, who alone had the authority to do so. The doctrine preached by such a man

in the name of God cannot be anything else than true; otherwise God would be authorizing a lie and confirming imposture by placing upon it the seal of His authority by the performance of deeds which He alone could accomplish.

2. Jesus performed a great number of miracles with the *special and formal purpose* of bearing witness to the mission with which He claimed to be entrusted. We shall mention some of these miracles.

(*a*) Questioned by the disciples of John the Baptist, if He were indeed the divine Messenger promised and expected to achieve the salvation of the world, Jesus gives as His answer the self-evident facts of the miracles He performs before their eyes: "*The blind see, the lame walk, the dumb speak, the dead rise again.*" (Luke 7, 22.) This is declaring nobly and openly who He is and what kind of proofs He furnishes to substantiate His assertions, viz., the most wonderful miracles He actually wrought before the admiring multitude of His hearers.

(*b*) The Pharisees having asked of Him a miracle as a special proof of His mission, acknowledged by this very fact the force of such a proof; and Jesus appeals not less than seven times to the miracle of His future resurrection (Matt. 12), as a most convincing proof of His divinity.

(*c*) In another place Jesus says plainly to His hearers that if they will not believe His teaching, they should believe in His works: "*Otherwise, believe for the very works' sake.*" (John 14, 12.)

(*d*) On another occasion the Jews, perplexed by His astounding works, but not sincere in their intentions, said to Him: "*How long dost Thou hold our souls in suspense? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.*" Jesus answered them: "*I speak to you, and you believe not: the works that I do in the name of My Father, they give testimony of Me.*" And proclaiming in a most formal manner, not only His divine mission, but also the divinity of His person, He adds: "*If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though you will not believe Me, believe the works,*

that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me and I in the Father." (John 10, 37–38.)

(*e*) At the time of the resurrection of Lazarus, Jesus formally declares that He performs that miracle in order that the people that witnessed it should recognize His divine mission, "*that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.*" (John 11, 42.)

§ II. Second Proof

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

221. I. Special Importance of this Miracle. Among the miracles of Jesus Christ, there is one *more important* than all the others; it is the miracle of His own resurrection. Even if there were no other miracle, the resurrection alone would be a summary, peremptory and decisive proof of the divinity of Christ's mission and doctrine. This proof has moreover the exceptional advantage of being within the reach and capacity of every mind; to appreciate its value and convincing evidence one needs only have an upright mind, seeking the truth in good faith. For it is plainly a matter beyond all doubt that, if it was by His *own* power that Jesus Christ returned to life, He must be God, and that, if this prodigy was effected by the *power of God,* Christ's mission is evidently divine; for it is impossible that God, whose sanctity, goodness and wisdom are infinite, would have made good the prediction of an impostor and confirmed His doctrine with the stamp of truth, that is, with a real genuine miracle, the unanswerable evidence of divine truth.

Jesus Christ Himself, in predicting His resurrection, put it forth as *the most striking* proof of His divine mission. The Apostles have done likewise in their preaching; and when the question arose of choosing a disciple to replace the traitor Judas, they insisted that the man to be chosen should have been a witness of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (Acts 1, 21-22.) St. Paul (I Cor. 15, 17), does not hesitate to declare that his preaching would be all in

vain, as would be the faith of Christians, if Christ had not risen from the dead. Finally, the enemies of Jesus themselves, the Jews, so well understood the demonstrative force of the resurrection, that they placed a guard at the sepulchre to render any trickery impossible; and in the course of time, the opponents of revelation have omitted nothing to destroy the belief in this capital fact which, if well established, carries with it an irresistible evidence of divine truth.

Let us then show that the resurrection of the divine Founder of Christianity is a fact as real and as *certain* as it is important; let us prove that God surrounded it with so many guarantees, that not to admit it, would be to close one's eyes obstinately to the shining light of the noonday sun.

222. II. Historical Statement of the Fact itself. Let us begin by summing up *the principal details* of this great event, as they are related in the Gospels.

On Friday, the eve of the Sabbath, about three o'clock of the afternoon, the soldiers came according to custom, to break the legs of the three who had been crucified. After having done this to the two thieves, seeing that Jesus was already dead, they did not break His legs, but one of the soldiers opened His side with a lance, and immediately there came out blood and water. (St. John, an ocular witness of the death of Christ, 19, 34.) Towards nightfall Joseph of Arimathea, a decurion belonging to the nobility, besought of Pilate the privilege of taking away the body of Jesus for the purpose of giving it honorable burial. Pilate inquired of the centurion who had superintended the execution if Jesus was really dead. On receiving his affirmative answer, Pilate complied with the request of the Arimathean, who came and took down from the cross the body of Jesus. Then Joseph and another disciple, Nicodemus, embalmed the body, wrapping it up in linen cloths, anointing it with spices, after the manner of the Jews in the burial of the dead, and they laid it in a new sepulchre which Joseph had caused to be hewed in the rock for himself. And having rolled a huge stone at the entrance, they departed.

Matthew, it is true, uses the word *next day;* but this day,

the next day, was the legal Sabbath, and, according to the custom of the Jews, began in the evening. The Jewish day, as formally shown in Leviticus (23, 32), was the time comprised between two sunsets. It is, therefore, from Friday evening that the sepulchre was sealed and guarded by soldiers.

The same evening, the chief priests and the Pharisees begged of Pilate to have guards placed over the sepulchre. *"Sir, we have remembered that that seducer said, while he was yet alive: After three days I will rise again. Command therefore the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day, lest His disciples come and steal Him away, and say to the people: He is risen from the dead; and the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate saith to them: You have a guard; go, guard it as you know. And they, departing, made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting guards."* (Matt. 27, 63–66.)

And the next day, when it began to dawn, on the first day of the week, there was a great earthquake, and an angel in human form, with a countenance as bright as lightning, and with raiment as white as snow, rolled back the stone and sat upon it. (Matt. 28.) The sepulchre was empty; there only remained the linen cloths and the shroud carefully wrapped up. The guards, struck with terror, fled, and came to the chief priests and told them the things that had happened. The chief priests *"gave a great sum of money to the soldiers, saying: Say you, His disciples came by night, and stole Him away when we were asleep."* (Matt. 28, 12–15.)

The same day and the following days up to His Ascension, at different intervals, Jesus showed Himself to Mary Magdalene, the holy women, and to the disciples, separately or together. He spoke to His disciples of the kingdom of heaven and gave them sensible, tangible proofs of the truth of His resurrection, eating with them, showing them His wounds, even inviting them to touch the openings on His hands, feet and side. (John 20, 27.) He appeared for the last time on a mountain in Galilee to over five hundred disciples, and ascended before them into heaven. (Mark 16; Luke 24; Acts 1.)

This is, in an abridged form, the Gospel narrative, on which we shall ground our demonstration. If it is exact and entirely reliable, as it has been proved above (nn. 193, 199); the event narrated cannot evidently be explained in any other way than by divine intervention. This is so true, that unbelievers, themselves, do not attempt to explain it away by natural causes; they rather endeavor to contest the reality of the fact itself, striving to question the truth of its occurrence; but all in vain, as we shall at once show.

223. III. Certainty of the Resurrection. The truth of the Gospel and the veracity of its authors have been fully demonstrated in the preceding pages (nn. 189–199). Hence, the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, related with so many circumstantial details by the sacred writers, cannot be doubted. And yet, because of the exceptional importance of this miracle, we deem it advisable to make it the subject of a special examination and conscientious discussion. To prove the reality of the resurrection, it is enough to establish these facts, viz.: that Jesus Christ was really dead when placed in the tomb, and that subsequently He truly rose and showed Himself in full possession of life. To this convincing proof we shall add, as a superabundant confirmation, the impossibility of trickery or fraud on the part of the Apostles; then we shall show that the conversion of the world would have been impossible, if Jesus Christ had not come forth alive from the grave, rising from the dead in fulfillment of His explicit prediction.

224. First Proof. **A.** Jesus Christ was *truly dead* when He was taken down from the cross.

1. St. John, an eyewitness, and the other Evangelists, distinctly *affirm* that Jesus died on the cross;

2. We cannot, on the other hand, doubt it if we consider the atrocious tortures, which He had suffered before being nailed to the cross, and the wonder is that He could have lived three full hours after the cruel tortures He endured. In fact, the crucifixion alone, according to Josephus, was sufficient to cause His death;

3. The soldiers ordered to break His legs abstained from doing so because they were *assured* of His death;

4. The *thrust of the lance* given Him at that moment by the Roman centurion Longinus would have been enough to take from Him the last breath of life;

5. Pilate gave up to Joseph of Arimathea the body of Jesus only after he had obtained the official attestation of the centurion that Jesus was really dead;

6. The Jews themselves were fully convinced of it; if they had entertained the least doubt of His death, they would not have failed to verify the fact before placing a guard over the sepulchre, and if there had been any need of it, they would have certainly completed their deicidal crime by putting Him to death. And in truth, neither the Sanhedrin, nor the rabbis, nor the Roman or Greek sophists ever bethought themselves of saying that Jesus was not dead. And even in our day, it is not to this silly gratuitous supposition that recourse is generally had by those who attempt to deny the resurrection.

225. **B.** Jesus Christ *really showed Himself full of life after His death.*

1. This fact is attested by *many ocular* witnesses, who, after having seen their divine Master expire upon the cross, beheld Him alive, not in a dream, nor during their sleep, but during the day and whilst they were in full possession of their faculties. They heard His words, received His commands, touched and felt His sacred Humanity and His wounds, even ate food with Him. (I John 1, 1–2.)

2. It was during *forty days* and under *the most varied circumstances,* that they found themselves again in the company of Jesus, at the tomb, on the road to Emmaus, in the guest chamber of the Cenacle, on the border of the sea, on Mount Olivet, etc. At one time it was the holy women, at another Peter, and again the disciples of Emmaus; then the Apostles assembled together in the absence of St. Thomas, who refuses to believe them; then the same Apostles, with St. Thomas, who becomes convinced by ocular evidence; again

seven Apostles on the border of the sea; and in another place, it is a crowd of over five hundred Apostles and disciples, the greater number of whom were still living when St. Paul appealed to their testimony. (I Cor. 15, 6.)

3. Finally these men, the Apostles and first disciples of Christ, have been willing to suffer death in testimony of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And yet, far from being the dupes of *excessive credulity,* they were at first very slow and reluctant to believe; one of them, indeed, had even refused to yield to the unanimous testimony of the other Apostles, protesting that he would not believe until he had felt with his own hands the wounds of the risen Savior.

Thus, from the *nature* of these miraculous apparitions, their *great number,* their *various circumstances* and the *number and variety of the witnesses,* it follows most clearly that *the fact of the resurrection* of Jesus Christ is not less certain than *His death.* The fact, then, of this miracle is, therefore, undeniable and cannot be called in question.

226. Second Proof. We might content ourselves with the above decisive demonstration. However, the more to *confirm* this great miracle, and to refute, at the same time, the objections most commonly urged by unbelievers, we shall show that it would have been absolutely impossible for His disciples to steal the body of their Master from the tomb. For that purpose we shall prove: I. That they could not have had the intention of taking away the body. II. That, had they so intended, they could not have succeeded in carrying out that iniquitous project.

I. *The disciples could not have had the intention of stealing the body of Jesus Christ.* No man will throw Himself into an enterprise full of peril without strong motives to urge him; and, still more, a number of men will not unite together in a plot, both dangerous and odious, without any motive of self-interest and against their own interests. This, however, is precisely what would have to be admitted, if the Apostles conceived the plot, which the advocates of unbelief attribute to them.

227. 1. They would have acted *without motive.* For either

the disciples believed in the approaching resurrection of their Master, or they did not believe in it, or they were in doubt.

In *the first case,* if they believed, the stealing of the body was absolutely useless. In the second case, if they did not believe, they had only to abandon the cause and fellowship of a man, in whom they no longer had any faith. In the third case, if they were in doubt, which was the true condition of their mind, as we learn from the discouraging and hesitating language of the disciples of Emmaus and from the difficulty the Apostles felt in believing in the resurrection even after it was related to them by witnesses, the plainest common sense would have impelled them not to attempt to steal the body, and thus endorse the supposed deception and imposture of their Master, but rather to wait for the events and to act afterwards according to what might happen.

Therefore, unless they were madmen, though nothing authorizes such a supposition, and unless their madness had been simultaneous, for they had to come to a common agreement, the thought of stealing the body of their Master could not have entered their minds.

2. They had, on the contrary, the *strongest motives* not to engage in such an enterprise.

(*a*) They saw around them none but enemies of Jesus Christ, enemies so bitter that they had just treated Him in the most cruel way, pursuing Him even unto death. They would have to expect, therefore, from these men nothing but insult, persecution and death.

(*b*) On the part of *God, the avenger of crime,* they would have to fear the punishment due to falsehood, blasphemy and impiety.

(*c*) They were, moreover, *certain to fail* shamefully and miserably in their foolish enterprise. How could these men without knowledge, without credit or fortune, have flattered themselves that they would succeed in the maddest project that it was possible to conceive, that of causing to be adored as a God by the whole earth a despicable impostor crucified in Judea?

(*d*) Finally, if Jesus had not arisen from the dead, He

could not have been in the eyes of His disciples anything but a fraudulent *impostor* and *the guilty author of their shame* and misery. Is it for such a man that they would have agreed to risk all, to expose themselves to every punishment in this life and in the next?

228. II. *Had they intended to steal the body, they could not have succeeded in doing so.* To convince oneself of this it is sufficient to briefly consider the nature and difficulties of such an undertaking.

The tomb was hewed in the rock, closed with a huge stone, sealed and guarded by soldiers. What means did the Apostles possess to achieve this feat, the carrying off of Christ's body? We can only imagine three: *violence, corruption or bribery,* and *trickery.* All three were equally impracticable.

1. *Violence:* The Apostles, whose shameful timidity is well known, who, during the Passion, had in such a cowardly way taken flight and abandoned their Master, were not the men to fight their way through a band of guards and break the public seals. Even had they done so, their act would not have remained unknown or unpunished.

2. *Corruption or bribery:* How could those men, who were themselves so poor, have corrupted the guards? It would have been necessary to gain them over at the post itself, where they were stationed and gain over all of them, to the very last man, for one alone could have betrayed all the others. And these soldiers, could they have relied on the fidelity of their associates in keeping the secret of the betrayal of their trust?

3. *Cunning or trickery:* How many impossibilities there must have been against the use of such means! How would they have reached the sepulchre? By a subterranean route? They would have had to dig their way through the rock in a few hours, without attracting the attention of the guards; then they would have had to fill up the passage on going away, without leaving any trace of their work. Before taking away the body, they would have foolishly spent their time in removing the cloths which enveloped it, in folding the linen which covered the head, and, to cap the climax of

absurdity, they would have overthrown the stone which closed the sepulchre, apparently in order not to create alarm! Are there not here absurdities enough? Can we suppose that they would have taken the usual path to the sepulchre? They would, in that case, have to trespass through the guards, break the seals, overthrow the stone, quietly remove the cloths, carefully fold the winding-sheet, then, with their precious burden, return as they came, and all this without noise, without anyone noticing their presence! Shall it be said that the guards were asleep? Then all, without exception, must have been sleeping and none awake to keep watch, a duty so sternly observed among soldiers; they must have slept so soundly that all these movements around them, in the silence of the night, did not awaken a single man! But admitting that all were buried in sleep, how could they have known of the theft of the body? Of what value is the testimony of sleeping witnesses? Here we cannot help recalling to the memory of our reader the ingenious dilemma of St. Augustine: "Either the Roman guards, placed to watch the tomb of the buried Savior, were awake, or they were asleep. If they were awake, why did they not prevent the Apostles from stealing Christ's body? And if they were asleep, how can they bear testimony to the supposed fraud? Can we rely on sleeping witnesses?" And how does it happen that search for the stolen body was not immediately ordered by the synagogue and the Roman governor? How was it that those unfaithful watchmen were not punished? Why was it that the Jews had to bribe them so that they would accuse themselves of having failed in their duty and divulge their own shame? How explain that afterwards the Jews, who were wont to reproach the Apostles with preaching in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, did not simply accuse them of having stolen the body of their Master? Barely two months elapsed after the resurrection, when the Apostles preached this great miracle, the Jews went no further than to have them flogged and ordered to keep silence. (Acts 5, 40.)

It is thus seen that whatever way it may turn, infidelity finds itself everywhere confronted with and confounded by

its own falsehoods. This is a literal fulfillment of the prophetic words of David, the figure of the Messias, when he said: *"Unjust witnesses have risen up against me, and iniquity hath lied to itself."* (Ps. 26, 12.) Weak and contemptible, indeed, are the quibbles, by which the uneasy conscience of some individuals seek to escape from the certainty of this great fact. This is because it is impossible to deny the truth of the resurrection without placing oneself in direct opposition to reason and common sense.

229. Third Proof. Even admitting what is absolutely *impossible,* viz.: that the Apostles wished indeed to steal the body of Jesus and that they had actually succeeded in their mad undertaking; there was yet another and a far greater difficulty, which they could not have possibly overcome: this was to convince the world that Jesus had truly risen from the dead, and that He was God, when, in reality, if He did not rise, He would have been only a man, a common criminal justly condemned by human authority, and made to endure the shameful penalty of death on the cross. What obstacles were there not to the success of such a scheme!

1. All the accomplices, authors or abettors of this criminal project would have been obliged to come to an understanding as to how they would tell their lie and bind themselves to maintain it consistently, even in the midst of most frightful sufferings, and this solely to insure the success of an infamous fraud!

2. It would have been necessary to deceive the many disciples, who had not participated in the conspiracy, and induce them to believe in purely imaginary appearances of Jesus; it would have been necessary to inspire them with such a strong faith as to lead them to brave the most horrible torments and even death, rather than entertain the least doubt as to the reality of the resurrection.

3. It would have been necessary to deceive not only the pagans, who shrank from the severe morality of Christ, despised His poverty and mocked at the folly of His death upon a cross, but also the Jews, who hated Jesus Christ, and having seen Him die on the cross, had every interest to

expose the fraud. Yet it is known that 3000 Jews were converted by the first preaching of St. Peter at Jerusalem, and that by his second the number was increased to 5000. (Acts, 4, 4.)

4. And finally, could any one believe that these men, not endowed with any of the qualities which carry the masses, would have accomplished that prodigious thing, the conversion of the whole world *without* the aid of miracles? If the resurrection was not a real fact, then, in Dante's words: "That all the world, said I, should have been turned to Christian, and no miracle been wrought, would in itself be such a miracle, the rest were not an hundredth part so great." (Parad. 24, 108.) Two of the Church's greatest Doctors had before Dante already expressed this thought. "It would, indeed," says St. Thomas, "have been the most amazing of miracles if, without any miraculous prodigy, a few simple, unknown men had persuaded the world to embrace a Faith containing mysteries so far beyond man's comprehension, which entailed obligations so onerous, and anticipated a future so sublime." (Contr. Gent., 1, 6.) "The resurrection alone," says St. Augustine, "could ever have inspired the disciples with faith in the Church, and in the future held out by Christian Hope; but we, who have the marvellous spectacle of the ever-enduring Church before us, are certain that Christ rose from the dead. But if any one believes that the Apostles wrought no miracles when they preached the resurrection and the ascension of Christ, this miracle alone would suffice us: *that the whole world believed without miracles.*" (Civ. Dei, 22, 5.)

They would have succeeded in converting the world by a simple assertion, for, as to miracles, they could not have expected them, as evidently God could not have performed them for the benefit of worthless impostors, for eternal Truth could not sanction a lie.

Conclusion. What victorious force is there not in the proofs of the resurrection when taken altogether? What will men then believe, if they refuse to admit a fact which has been proven in so complete and convincing a manner? (See

Bourdaloue's sermon on the proofs of the resurrection, and also the sermon of Card. Giraud.)

230. Objections. Thus the truth of the resurrection is so fully established as to leave no room for reasonable doubt. We deem it, however, advisable to notice some of the attempts that impiety has made to destroy belief in this all-important miracle. The futility of these efforts only brings out the truth all the more brilliantly.

1. Strauss gives himself great trouble to find out how the body of Jesus Christ *disappeared from the tomb,* for this, he admits, is a capital point. He ends by reaching the most unreasonable solution possible; he claims that the body remained in the sepulchre.

After what we have said, it is evident that this is an explanation contrary to all the Gospels and even contrary to all likelihood. If it were as pretended, viz., if Christ's body had remained in the tomb, would not the Jews have been able to see it and point out the fact of no resurrection to the multitudes, thus destroying with one stroke all belief in that miracle?

The manner with which Renan strives to crawl out of the difficulty, though it may be more convenient, is not more ingenious. "It is an idle question, that cannot be solved," he says, "and the world will never know the true account." This declaration does not, however, prevent him from trying a dozen other solutions: removal of the body by the Apostles; removal by the disciples, who bring it to Galilee; removal by the Jews; perhaps even removal by the owner of the garden; the folded shroud would lead to the belief that a woman's hand was there. Finally he rejects all these explanations, and ends by saying that it is *by mere chance* that the body of Christ disappeared. What a pitiful exhibition of stupidity mixed with the most unwarrantable obstinacy!

2. These unbelievers meet with no less embarrassment when they endeavor to explain the steadfast belief of the Apostles in the resurrection. Strauss admits at once the necessity of finding some kind of explanation, for, says he, "If we cannot, without admitting a miracle, find a way to

explain the origin of the belief in the resurrection of Jesus, we are obliged to disown all that we have said and to abandon our undertaking." He rejects moreover the hypothesis of imposture on the part of the Apostles: "Never," he says very truly, "could they have drawn from falsehood a faith which was ever ready to meet death itself." But when it comes to finding an acceptable explanation, he cannot do better than say that the Apostles were deceived by their *imagination*. According to Strauss and Renan, the belief in the resurrection of Christ would be the simple result of *hallucination* on the part of the disciples, the creation of their excited imagination. The latter says: "As they were in a state of great excitement, they have taken as reality that which was only the sport of the imagination."

Is there any need to answer such a gratuitous affirmation? If we cannot believe witnesses offering such guarantees of veracity as the disciples did, whom are we to believe? If the resurrection of Christ has no other foundation than hallucination, the Apostles and disciples must have believed that they saw that which they did not see, heard that which they did not hear, and touched that which they did not touch. Is not this directly contrary to the Gospel account? Far from being predisposed to accept too easily the truth of the resurrection, they shut themselves up in the guest chamber through fear of the Jews; utterly discouraged, they seem to have lost sight of the predictions of their Master. They refuse to believe in the testimony of the holy women; and when Jesus shows Himself to them, they at first take Him for a ghost. To undeceive them, the Lord has to make them touch and feel His body; He had to eat with them. Could this be the conduct of men under the spell of hallucination? And let us bear in mind this important remark that, according to the hypothesis of our adversaries, it would have been necessary that *all* the disciples, without a single exception, should have been the victims of hallucination, even the discouraged disciples of Emmaus, even the incredulous Thomas, and the five hundred witnesses of the Ascension of Jesus. Moreover, the hallucination would have lasted for forty days,

and would have existed under all the various circumstances that surrounded them, and, what would be no less strange, it would have suddenly and finally ceased after the Ascension!

This, however, is not all. It would be necessary to admit that the removal of the stone from the opening of the sepulchre and the terror of the guards are nothing more than illusions; that the guards themselves were also hallucinated; that it was only in the imagination of the disciples that the earth trembled and the sepulchre was found empty. One is tempted to ask if the writers, who advance such statements, are not making a contemptuous sport of their readers and relying on their supposed astounding gullibility.

Even if all this were possible, there would still remain a prodigious fact to be accounted for, viz., to explain how it is that Christianity, which in this hypothesis would have no other foundation than an illusion, could have succeeded in establishing itself, how it could have regenerated the world and, despite every obstacle, preserved stability through the flight of nineteen centuries down to our day. This would be a miracle greater than all the others.

The reader will find in "Le 13e Apôtre," (The 13th Apostle), by Henri Lasserre, a clever refutation of Renan's system. The author sarcastically exposes its absurdity, by explaining in the *same manner what is supposed to be the pretended return* of Napoleon from the Island of Elba. He applies to the *Hundred Days* not only the style of argument, but the very phrases of Renan, and in this way he proves positively that the return of Napoleon had no reality elsewhere than in the imagination of the hallucinated admirers of the great conqueror of modern times. The application of the argument to the fact of Christ's resurrection is easily made.

Conclusion. It is, therefore, absolutely certain that the writers of the Gospel were not mistaken as to the resurrection of Christ; that they did not wish to deceive, and that had they so wished, they could not have succeeded in their attempt. Hence, Jesus Christ, after a death truly real, came out alive from the tomb, as He Himself had predicted, as a proof of

His divine mission: "*Resurrexit sicut dixit.*" He is, therefore, the envoy of God, and His work, the Christian religion, is a divine work.

The reader may consult with profit the following authors: Mazzella, S.J., "De Religione et Ecclesia," prop. xiii; Hettinger, "Revealed Religion," ch. v; Schanz, "Christian Apology," vol. iii, chap. xvi; Picard, "Christianity or Agnosticism," part II, chap. iv; Schouppe, S. J., "Religious Instruction," part I, p. 5.

§ III. Third Proof

The Fulfillment of the Prophecies Which Concern the Person and the Mission of Jesus Christ

I. Enumeration of Some of the Prophecies

231. From the fall of the first man God never ceased to send prophets to announce and describe, with most precise and minute circumstances, the Messias, who was to replace the ancient religion by one more perfect, destined for all time and for all nations. These divine messengers indicate the precise time when the Messias was to appear upon the earth, the family to which He was to belong, the city in which He was to be born; they give, many centuries beforehand, circumstantial details as to His birth, life, preaching, miracles, sufferings, death and triumph over death and the world. In short, the prophets predicted concerning the future Messias, the world's Redeemer, the time of His coming, the circumstances of His birth, of His life, of His preaching, His miracles, His sufferings and His death. They foretold His resurrection from the dead, His Ascension into heaven and the sending of the Holy Ghost. They announced, centuries before, the destruction of Jerusalem, which was to take place after Christ's death, the rejection of the Jews, the conversion of the Gentiles, the founding, the spreading and stability of His Church even to the end of time. To allude, briefly, to some of the most striking predictions, the Patriarch Jacob prophesied that the Messias would come at a time when the sceptre, viz.: their political independence, had been taken

away from the house of Judah. The prophet Daniel indicated the exact time more clearly still, as he announced that from the decree of Cyrus for the rebuilding of Jerusalem till the death of the Messias, there would elapse nearly seventy weeks of seven years each, viz.: nearly four hundred and ninety years. And the Prophet Aggeus said that at the coming of the Messias the second temple would still be standing, and that the whole world would be in great expectation of the coming Savior.

Let us show, as to some points in particular, how far the prophetic details go, in announcing the coming of the Redeemer.

232. 1. The Coming of the Redeemer and His Qualities. Son of Abraham (Gen. 12), a descendant of the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49), from David, His progenitor (Ps. 88; Is. 11; Jer. 23, etc.), the Messias, the expectation of nations (Gen. 49; Agg. 2), born of a Virgin (Is. 7; Jer. 31; Ezech. 44), in the town of Bethlehem (Mich. 5), before the complete subjection and dispersion of the nation (Gen. 49), the seventieth week of years after the edict for the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem (Dan. 9), and before the destruction of the second temple by a foreign nation (Agg. 2; Mal. 3).

His coming will be preceded by a universal peace (Ps. 71; Is. 2; Dan. 9; Zach. 3), and it will be announced and prepared by a special messenger or forerunner (Mal. 3), whose voice will be heard in the desert (Is. 40).

The Messias will be in name and fact Jesus or the Savior (Habac. 3; Is. 51, etc.), Emmanuel or God with us (Is. 7), the Christ or the anointed (Ps. 2, 44; Is. 61), Son of God (Ps. 2; Os. 13), God (Is. 9, 25, 35, 40; Ps. 44, 109; Bar. 3; Mal. 3), the hidden God (Is. 45), priest according to the order of Melchisedech (Ps. 109), the just above all (Jer. 23; Wisd. 2; Is. 45, 62, etc.), the Holy and the Holy of Holies (Ps. 4, 15; Is. 12; Dan. 9), the admirable, the counsellor, the mighty God, the Father of the coming ages, the Prince of Peace (Is. 9).

233. 2. His Birth and Youth. He will be adored by the kings of the East, who will offer gold and incense (Ps. 71;

Is. 60); Rachel (whose grave is near Bethlehem) shall be weeping in vain for her children (Jer. 31); the Savior will sojourn in Egypt (Os. 11), and at Nazareth in Galilee (Is. 9, according to the Hebrew text); He will converse with the inhabitants of Zion (Is. 12, etc.), and He will honor the temple with His presence (Agg. 2; Mal. 3).

He will be poor and given up to labor from His youth (Ps. 87), and yet He will be King and eternal possessor of a kingdom, which will extend even to the extremities of the earth (Ps. 2). He will be obedient (Ps. 39), meek and peaceful (Ps. 119). They prophesy His return from Egypt, His public teaching, His wonderful miracles, His meekness, His forbearing love and tenderness, His public entry into Jerusalem (Is. 1, 11, 32; Zach. 9; Os. 11, 1).

234. 3. His Apostolic Career. Without sadness, without clamor, without acception of persons, He will not trample under foot the broken reed and He will not quench the brand which is still smoking (Is. 42); He will go seeking for the lost sheep, He will lift up those that are fallen, He will bind the sores of those that are wounded, He will give strength to the weak, confirm the faithful and lead them in the way of justice (Ezech. 34); He will console the afflicted (Is. 61), and perform miracles in favor of the blind, the deaf, the dumb, etc. (Is. 35, 42). And yet, notwithstanding the intrinsic efficacy of His divine word (Is. 11, 49), despite the brightness of the celestial light shining round about Him (Is. 9, 42, 60), the Messias will be a rock of scandal and an occasion of ruin for a great number of Jews (Is. 1, 6, 8, 42), who will obstinately reject Him.

235. 4. His Passion and Death. They then weighed thirty pieces of silver for my ransom. And the Lord said to me: Go, give to the worker in clay this great sum at which they have valued me when they put me up at a price (Zach. 11). Truly He has taken upon Himself our weakness, He charged Himself with our sorrows. He appeared to us like unto a leper, stricken by God and humiliated. He was covered with wounds for our iniquities, He has been bruised for our sins The punishment, which was to give us peace, has fallen

upon Him, and we have been cured by His bruises. We were wandering in evil ways, and God loaded Him with all our iniquities; He smote Him for the sins of His people. In Him there is no more beauty nor brightness. We have seen Him; He was not to be recognized, an object of contempt, the last of men, a man of sorrows and all disfigured; He was led to death as a lamb and as a sheep that is dumb before him who is shearing it, He did not open His mouth (Is. 53); He is more like a worm than a man, the opprobrium of men and the scum of the people (Ps. 21). What are these wounds in the midst of thy hands? These wounds were given to me by those who called themselves my friends (Zach. 13). They have pierced my hands and my feet; they have counted all my bones. They considered and examined me; they have divided my clothes between them and they cast lots for the possession of my garment (Ps. 21). All those who saw me mocked me; they have spoken with the lips and shaken their head. He has placed confidence in the Lord, they say; let the Lord deliver Him; let Him save Him if it be true that He loves Him (Ps. 21; Wisd. 2). They surrounded me like bulls and they roared like lions; they raged against me like a pack of hounds (Ps. 21). They offered me gall as food, and to quench my thirst, they gave me vinegar (Ps. 68); all the day long I have been an object of derision to the whole people (Jer. Lament.).

We plainly see that the prophets predicted by divine inspiration nearly all the circumstances attending the Redeemer's passion and death: that He should be sold for thirty pieces of silver, that He should be bound like a malefactor, brought before judges as a criminal, outraged and spat upon; that they would pluck out His hair, whip Him, strike Him, give Him vinegar and gall to drink, nail Him to a cross, and mock Him whilst He hung thereon. That they would divide His clothes, and cast lots for His seamless gown, and that they would break no bone of His body (Zach. 11, 12; Is. 1, 6; Ps. 21). They moreover, foretold that His tomb shall be glorious and His body free from corruption; that He would raise Himself to life again, ascend into heaven and pour forth

His Spirit into the hearts of the children of men (Ps. 20; Is. 11; Joel. 2, 28–29).

236. 5. Establishment of His Church. God will spread His Spirit over the inhabitants of Jerusalem; He will give them a new spirit and a new heart (Is. 46; Ezech. 37; Joel 2). Preached at first in Zion (Mich. 11), the word of God will be carried by faithful witnesses (Is. 66, 19), into Africa, Lydia, Italy, Greece, to the distant islands, to the nations plunged in the shadow of death, which they will win to the Lord (Is. 60). I will make them pass through fire and try them as gold is tried (Zach. 13). A new alliance will unite all peoples (Is. 49; Jer. 31; Os. 2, etc.); the wolf and the lamb, the sheep and the lion will live together meek and peaceful (Is. 11; Soph. 3; Jer. 32).

237. 6. The Sacrifice of the New Law. The line of the prophets ends with Malachy. To crown the splendid series of revelations concerning the Messias, the Lord predicts through His servants that the sacrifices of the old law, hitherto offered only in the temple at Jerusalem, will be replaced by a spotless oblation, which will be offered in all places and among all people (Mal. 1, 10–11). Isaias and David had already predicted that this sacrifice of the new alliance would be offered by priests chosen among all nations (Is. 66), in the name of and representing Christ the supreme pontiff according to the order of Melchisedech (Ps. 109). The prophet Daniel (9, 26–27) in particular foretells that a strange people would come with their leader to destroy Jerusalem and the temple, and that the Jews, blinded by their obstinacy, should be rejected, dispersed among all nations, and be without priests, temple and sacrifices, and that the desolation should continue even to the consummation and to the end (Dan. 9, 27).

238. 7. Prophetic Figures of the Messias. God wished that the mind of His people should always be full of the thoughts of the coming Redeemer, so that everything should recall Him to their memory. Hence He was not satisfied with announcing His coming by the ministry of the prophets, but conforming Himself to the genius of the Jewish people

and in general to that of all oriental nations, He was careful to *prefigure* the Messias by *living types* and *symbolic facts.* Thus, among the living types are Isaac, Joseph, Moses, David, Jonas; among the *symbolic facts* are the paschal lamb, the manna, the brazen serpent. It may be said, indeed that the whole worship and the institutions of the people of Israel had a typical character. "All the government of this people," says St. Augustine, "was but a continual prophecy of the king whom they were expecting." Though this kind of prophecy does not serve as a basis for the proof which we are now developing, it has, nevertheless, a great value, and efficaciously tends to complete the demonstration drawn from the prophecies properly so-called.

Five hundred years elapsed between the closing of the Messianic prophecies and their fulfillment. We all know full well that to render impossible any doubt as to the fact that said prophecies had been uttered and registered centuries before their fulfillment, Divine Providence wisely disposed that the Old Testament should be translated into Greek, about 250 years before the coming of Jesus Christ, and that this translation, called the Septuagint, should be spread all over the world long before the coming of the Messias.

But these prophecies, so great in numbers, made by a long succession of men, who for more than 4000 years came to announce, with most precise details, the same extraordinary and unforeseeable event, were they ever fulfilled? This is a question of the greatest importance, and it deserves at our hands a completely satisfactory answer.

II—Fulfillment of the Messianic Prophecies

239. To become fully convinced of the exact fulfillment of all these prophecies in the person of Jesus Christ and in Him alone, it is sufficient to read the Gospels. The agreement between the Old and New Testaments, between prediction and fulfillment, figure and realization, is so striking, that did we not know, with absolute certainty, that the prophetic books had been in existence many centuries before Jesus

Christ, we might be inclined to think that they were written after the events by historians and eyewitnesses and not by prophets.

1. *The time of the coming* of the Messias, had been so clearly announced and so extensively spread over the earth that at the time of the establishment of the Roman Empire, and the prevalence of universal peace in its vast domain, not only the Jews but all nations were in expectation of the great event. This *expectation* itself had been foretold and it is attested by all contemporary historians. "People were generally persuaded," says Tacitus, "on the faith of ancient prophecies, that the East was to prevail and that from Judea were to come the masters and rulers of the world." (Hist. 5, 13.) Suetonius, in his life of Emperor Vespasian, writes thus: "It was an old and constant belief, throughout the entire East, that by an undubitably certain decree the descendants of the Jews were to attain the highest power." (4.) And the Jewish historian Josephus expresses himself in nearly the same terms regarding this tradition. This expectation of a promised Redeemer was so general and so deeply rooted in the minds of the Jews, that they blindly followed any impostor who might proclaim himself the precursor of the Messias or the Messias himself. Hence the many strifes and revolts which preceded the ruin of Jerusalem, caused, in great part, by religious dissensions. (Acts 5, 36, 37.)

And most remarkable circumstance! Whilst Europe was expecting a Savior from the East, the East Indians and the Chinese were expecting one from the West. This is attested by Voltaire himself in his "Additions to General History." From all sides the eyes of the world were directed to that part of the globe, which Boulanger, another unbeliever, very aptly calls "the pole of hope for all nations."

2. The other *prophecies* have been no less exactly fulfilled. It can be said with truth that the prophecies of the Old Testament are a faithful, vivid representation of the life and death of Christ, the abridged history of His works, and of the marvelous establishment of His Church. The relation between the predictions and their accomplishment is manifest

and the verification self-evident. The prophets are witnesses who give evidence unanimously in favor of Jesus: *"Huic omnes prophetæ testimonium perhibent,"* says St. Peter to the Jews (Acts 10, 43). All the predictions, all the prophetic types, all the figurative institutions of the old law refer to Jesus of Nazareth, and prove that He is the true Messias indicated by divine inspiration, the Savior of mankind.

3. Is there anything astonishing in the fact that the Apostles should constantly bring up *the testimony of the prophets* to convince the Jews of the mission of Christ? To other hearers they offer arguments of another kind; but for their fellow-countrymen nothing could have the same convincing force as the prophecies. Thus St. Peter makes them the basis of his exhortations, which converted thousands of persons. After giving himself out as a witness of the celestial voice heard on Mount Tabor, he appeals to the prophecies as a still more irrefutable proof: *"Habemus firmiorem propheticum sermonem—we have the more firm prophetical word: whereunto you do well to attend as to a light that shineth in a dark place."* (II Pet. 1, 19.) St. Paul, in his turn, devoted entire days to show them the divinity and heavenly mission of Jesus as exhibited in the law of Moses and in the prophets: *"Suadebat eis de Jesu ex lege Moysi et prophetis, a mane usque ad vesperam: persuading them concerning Jesus, out of the law of Moses and the prophets, from morning until evening."* (Acts 28, 23.)

4. Christ openly declared Himself to be the expected Messias, and to prove the truth of His declaration, He repeatedly appealed to the prophecies, perfectly familiar to the minds of His hearers. *"Search the Scriptures,"* He said to the Jews, *"for the same are they that give testimony of Me."* (John 5, 39.) At another time, having entered the synagogue, a place of religious worship at Nazareth, He opened the Scriptures and quoted a passage from the prophet Isaias: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Wherefore He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, He hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart. To preach deliverance*

to the captives, and sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of reward. And when He had folded the book, He restored it to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them: This day is fulfilled this Scripture in your ears." (Luke 4, 18–21.) And when the Samaritan woman at the well said: "*I know that the Messias cometh (who is called Christ); therefore, when He is come, He will tell us all things,*" Jesus saith to her: "*I am He, who am speaking with thee.*" (John 4, 25–26.)

5. *Jesus* aroused the courage of His disciples by showing them that the things which troubled and harassed them were in reality the accomplishment of the prophecies: "*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and so to enter into His glory?*" "*And beginning from Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the scriptures, the things that were concerning Him.*" (Luke 24, 26–27.) Previously He had said to the Jews: "*Search the Scriptures for . . . the same are they that give testimony of Me.*" (John 5, 39.)

240. Conclusion. From the fulfilling of so many prophecies, made many centuries in advance, concerning events impossible to conjecture, it must clearly follow that Jesus Christ is truly the Messias announced and expected during several thousands of years; consequently that the religion founded by Him and foretold from so far back is truly divine. For, He alone, to whom all times are present, who alone can *prepare and direct events* by His wisdom and omnipotence, could have made such revelations. "The fulfilling of all the prophecies," says Pascal very logically, "is a perpetual miracle, and no other proof is required to make known the divinity of the Christian religion."

It gives us pleasure to cite here a magnificent extract from Lacordaire. Having recalled the principal prophecies concerning the Messias, he addresses himself to infidels and exclaims: "And now, gentlemen, I ask you, what do you think of all this? Here are two facts, parallel to each other and corresponding exactly, both equally certain, both of colos-

sal proportions; one has existed more than two thousand years before Christ, the other is still existing, eighteen hundred years after Christ; one predicts a revolution immense and unforeseeable, the other is the fulfilling of this prediction; both have Jesus Christ as their beginning and end, and their bond of union. Once again, what do you think of this? Will you choose to deny? But what will you deny? Will it be the *existence* of the Messianic idea? But this idea is identified with the Jewish people, it is a living idea, it is met with in all the monuments of its history, it is to be found in all the traditions of mankind, in the most explicit avowals of the shrewdest and bitterest unbelievers. Would it be the *priority* of prophetic statements, viz.: the antecedent announcements of the prophecies in all their minutest details? But the Jewish people, who crucified Jesus Christ, and who had a national perpetual interest in despoiling Him of His Divinity, proclaim that these Scriptures were in former times what they are to-day; and for still greater guarantee of their authenticity, Divine Providence disposed that about two hundred and fifty years before Christ, under the king of Egypt, Ptolemy Philadelphus, all the Old Testament should be translated into Greek by his orders. Hence the Sacred Books soon fell into the possession of the Greeks, the Romans, in fact, of the whole civilized world. Will you turn to the other side of the question and deny the *fulfillment* of the Messianic idea? But the Catholic Church, the offspring of that idea, is before your eyes; it is She that baptized you. Is it by denying the agreement of these two astounding events that you will seek to support your untenable position? Will you deny that *Jesus Christ* has verified in His person the Messianic idea, that He was a Jew, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David, and the founder of the Catholic Church on the ruins of both the Synagogue and idolatry? But both parties, equally interested and utterly irreconcilable enemies, otherwise agree as to all this. The Jew says yes, and the Christian likewise says yes. Would you then say the exact concurrence of these wonderful events, precisely verified in the person of Christ, is the effect of chance? But chance, if anything like

it ever existed at all, is, at best, only a brief and fortuitous accident or coincidence; hence, its definition excludes the idea of regular succession: there is no chance which can last for two thousand years and then eighteen hundred years more.

"Gentlemen, when God performs His works, there is nothing to be done against Him. As the inspired writer tells us, *'There is no wisdom, there is no prudence, there is no counsel against the Lord.'* (Prov. 21, 30.) Jesus Christ appears to us as the moving, controlling spirit of the past as well as of the future: the connecting link of the times, which preceded Him, as well as of the times that followed Him, He appears to us in His ancestry, based on the Jewish people, which is the greatest social and religious monument of ancient times, and in His posterity, based on the Catholic Church, which is the greatest social and religious transformation of the new era. He appears to us holding in the left hand the Old Testament, the greatest book of the times, which preceded Him, and in His right, the Gospels, the greatest book of the times which followed Him. And yet, though thus preceded and thus followed, He is greater than His ancestry and greater than His posterity; greater than the patriarchs and prophets, greater than the Apostles and the martyrs. Superior to all that is most illustrious before Him and after Him, His sublime personality towers majestically above all created beings, and reveals Himself to us as the Son of the living God who has no rival and no equal."—(41st Conf., 1846.)

§ IV. Fourth Proof

The Miracles of the Apostles and of the Disciples of Jesus Christ

241. Prediction of these Miracles. The religion, which the disciples were to found, was to meet with innumerable obstacles. It was, indeed, necessary that God should furnish the help of miracles to those whom He was to intrust with this ministry. Jesus Christ, who wished that divine power should shine forth in the midst of human weakness, was careful to *promise in advance* this assistance to them: *"Amen,*

amen, I say to you, he that believeth in me, the works that I do he shall do also, and greater than these shall he do." (John 14, 12; Mark 16, 17–18; Matt. 28, 20.)

This most formal and explicit promise of the Master the Apostles announced and published in the Gospels, and thereby they committed themselves before the public as in duty bound to perform miracles. In fact, if they had not given most striking proofs of their miraculous powers, the spread of the Gospel would, at its very beginning, have met with insurmountable obstacles.

242. Fulfillment of this Prediction. To convince oneself of the literal fulfillment of the divine promise, it is sufficient to peruse the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and the early pages of ecclesiastical history. The reader will see how frequent were the miracles at the birth of the Church: "*They brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that when Peter came, his shadow at the least, might overshadow any of them, and they might be delivered from their infirmities.*" (Acts 5, 15.) Thus, in order to grow and become great, as St. Gregory says, the Christian religion, like a young tree, had to be watered with the divine dew of heavenly grace. These signs, according to St. Paul, were reserved for those who had not yet the faith. (I Cor. 14, 22; II Cor. 12, 12.)

I. Among the numerous miracles related in the Acts, we may mention in particular the case of the lame man at the door of the temple (ch. 3), and that of the many ill with the palsy (ch. 8); the cures performed by the very shadow of St. Peter (ch. 5); the miraculous deliverance of several of the Apostles from prison (ch. 5); the deliverance of St. Peter himself (ch. 12). We also find a great number of miracles performed by St. Paul at Ephesus and in other places, even by the simple touching of his garments (ch. 19); the resurrection of the young man at Troas (20, 9–12), etc.

Two other miracles, performed upon the person of the Apostles themselves, deserve particular attention. We refer to the descent of the Holy Ghost and the conversion of St. Paul.

II. The day of *Pentecost* saw performed, at one and the same time, a double miracle, a *physical miracle*, the descent of the Holy Ghost under the form of fiery tongues and the gift of languages granted to the Apostles; and there occurred besides a *moral miracle*, the complete transformation of the Apostles (Acts 2). One hundred and twenty persons were present in the Guest Chamber, the Cenacle (Acts 1, 15), when this great event took place, which was at once published all over the earth by the innumerable multitude of strangers, who were then at Jerusalem. If this miracle had not really taken place, the denial by these strangers on their return to their respective countries would have been enough to prevent the spread of the Gospel, and to crush Christianity in its very cradle.

III. The miracle of the *conversion* of St. Paul would, by itself, bring about the conversion of any man in good faith. (See Lyttleton's "The Christian Religion proven by the Conversion and Apostolate of St. Paul.")

Let us relate in a few words the history of this wonderful event. Saul, a violent persecutor of the Christians, is on his way to Damascus to arrest the disciples of the Crucified Savior and to bring them bound to Jerusalem; but on coming near to Damascus, in the full light of day, he is thrown to the ground by an invisible power and is struck blind. He hears the voice of Jesus Christ, and in an instant undergoes a complete moral change. At the same time Our Lord appears to Ananias and informs him of all that has happened to the new convert. Saul is cured of his blindness by Ananias, and receives baptism from his hands. Saul, becoming thus transformed into Paul, distinguished himself by his great love for Christ and by his generous and persevering zeal for the conversion of the Gentiles. (See the learned work of the Abbé Constant Fouard, entitled "Saint Peter and the first years of Christianity.")

No reasonable doubt can be entertained as to the reality of these facts; they are related three times in the Acts: in chapter 9 by St. Luke, and in chapters 22 and 26 by St. Paul, who also speaks of them in his Epistle to the Galatians (Gal.

1, 5). When a man of the character of St. Paul relates a fact like this, with the minutest details, and when we have as a warrant of its truthfulness, his extraordinary conversion, and the wonders that followed it, it cannot reasonably be supposed that he was the victim of hallucination.

It is no less evident that such facts cannot be explained otherwise than by *supernatural* causes. Renan, who proclaims the absolute impossibility of miracles, is compelled to find a natural explanation; but what an explanation! According to his idea, Paul was greatly excited; he was suffering from a violent fever and from inflammation of the eyes; then a storm arose, during which he imagined he heard Our Lord; after the storm he was sunstruck, which rendered him blind. . . . As to the proofs of all this, where are they? Renan dares not venture to bring forward the slightest semblance or shred of proof. And yet it is this same Renan who at a later date, had the hardihood to say: "It is the privilege of the rationalistic school always to explain the facts of history by sufficient and adequate causes."

IV. For the same reason, viz., the demonstration of divine truth, the gift of miracles, which had established on an immovable foundation the origin of the Church, continued to be felt in a particular manner during *the first centuries*, a period of trying ordeal to the faithful of that age. The Fathers of that period speak with perfect confidence of the wonders which were performed frequently and publicly under their eyes; they invite the pagans to come and see them; they defy them, for instance, to bring forward any man possessed, who would not be instantly delivered. These miraculous facts were, moreover, so well known that the enemies of Christianity never dreamt of denying them; hence the Fathers did not trouble themselves with demonstrating their reality; they merely devoted themselves to proving the intervention of *God* and not of the devil or of magic in these supernatural events.

V. Ecclesiastical history offers *in each of the following centuries* a great multitude of perfectly authentic miracles, so much so indeed, that the *Acts of the Saints* are a worthy continuation of the *Apostolic Acts*. It is sufficient, in order

to convince oneself of this, to peruse the "Acta Sanctorum" of the Bollandists. The reader may recall, for instance, what Sulpicius Severus, companion and biographer of St. Martin of Tours, says of the innumerable miracles, of which he was himself an eyewitness, and which gained for the holy bishop the name of *Thaumaturgus,* or the Wonder-worker. No less astonishing nor less authentic are the wonderful deeds of St. Simeon Stylites, related by Theodoret, an eyewitness who wrote a full account of them, especially for the benefit of those who crowded every day around the column of the holy anchorite. We can also see in "The City of God" of St. Augustine a series of wonderful miracles, performed in his day, and at times under his own eyes, especially by relics of St. Stephen, the first martyr, which had been but recently discovered. These three historians, no one will deny, deserve full confidence. We can find the account of these facts in the "Ecclesiastical History" of Abbé Darras, vol. X, p. 344; vol. XII, pp. 333 and 492.

VI. Who can in good faith deny that in our own day also God the Father gives to the divinity of His Son and to the Church, which is His work, the solemn and undeniable testimony of miracles? If we read, for instance, in the fifth volume of the book "Les Splendeurs de la Foi" (The Splendors of Faith) by Abbé Moigno, the chapter entitled *Le miracle au tribunal de la science* (Miracles before the tribunal of science): "We will find," the author very rightly says, "the rigorously, logical and complete demonstration of five miracles performed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, similar in every respect to the miracles related in the Gospels; a demonstration made by the most advanced sciences, a wonderful confirmation of the verdict pronounced by the Roman Congregation of Rites, the most august and most learned tribunal of the world. See in *Etudes religieuses* the account of the minute precautions taken at Lourdes to establish the genuineness of the miracles which are there frequently performed (Dec. 1890 and Jan. 1891). The discussion of miracles as an evidence of God's permanent action on behalf of His Church, is deferred to subsequent chapters of this

work. At present we simply quote several works relating to the apparitions and miracles of Lourdes, which, besides other both spiritual and temporal benefits, establish, beyond the possibility of reasonable doubt, the great fact of the existence of the supernatural, obstinately and bitterly combated and denied by modern atheists, agnostics and unbelievers: Richard F. Clarke, S. J., "Lourdes, Its Inhabitants, Its Pilgrims and Its Miracles," Benziger Bros., New York, 1888; "Miraculous Events at Lourdes," from the French of Henry Lasserre, John Murphy & Co., Baltimore, 1884; Dr. Boissarie, "Lourdes médicale," Lourdes from the Medical Point of View, and "Lourdes depuis 1858 jusqu' à nos jours," Lourdes from 1858 up to 1894; Sanard-Derangeon, Paris, 1894, "Le Triomphe de Lourdes" by Guy de Pierrefeu, Victor-Havard, Paris, 1893.

Remark. A *single* true miracle is sufficient to prove the divinity of a religion in whose favor it is manifestly performed. As such miracles have been performed in every century in favor of the religion of Jesus Christ, it would be necessary in order to destroy the present proof, to destroy also the historical testimony of *all the past centuries.* As one single signature well identified is sufficient to prove the authenticity of a document, such as a royal grant, a president's message, or the last will of a dying man, so one miracle, duly authenticated, suffices to establish the truth of the Christian religion and confound all its adversaries. Hence the case with us Christians in the face of all our enemies stands thus: while on one hand it is by no means necessary for us to prove the truth of all the miracles performed in confirmation of the truth of our faith, *for one is enough;* on the other hand, it is absolutely incumbent on our adversaries to refute and disprove them all, for if one single true miracle wrought in confirmation of our holy Religion is left to stand, the Christians have won the day, for they have clearly and unmistakably shown that God is with them, and their faith, bearing a divine seal and sanction, cannot but come from Him and do for men all that it purposes to accomplish, viz., to lead them to the knowledge of revealed faith and Christian truth. "*You*

shall know the truth," says Jesus Christ, "*and the truth shall make you free*" (John 8, 32): free indeed, with the freedom of the children of God and heirs of His kingdom. Archimedes once said: "Give me a point on which to rest, and I with a lever will lift the world." That was a bold utterance; yet even in this age of reckless daring and high pretensions we have yet to hear of any rationalist or unbeliever who would feel ready to undertake the gigantic task of confuting and disproving before the world not *one* miracle, not *several*, but *all* the miracles that have been wrought by the Almighty in confirmation of the truth of Christianity during the last 1900 years.

§ V. Fifth Proof

Fulfillment of the Prophecies Made by Jesus Christ Himself

243. We have seen that Jesus exactly *fulfilled in His person* the Messianic prophecies, thus demonstrating that He is truly the Messias foretold by the prophets. We shall now draw a new proof of His divine mission from the prophecies made by Himself. If it is true that, like a miracle, prophecy is a proof of the divinity of a mission and of a doctrine (n. 217), what would be its importance when the event predicted is itself a miracle? If to prophesy future events veritably fulfilled is indeed a true miracle, what shall we say of Him that foretells forthcoming miracles? Now, the prophecies of Christ have almost all of them this characteristic mark—they predict astounding miracles.

1. The Passion, Death and Resurrection. We need not devote much space to the prophecies which Jesus Christ has made concerning His own passion, death and resurrection. It will suffice to quote the following explicit prediction made to His Apostles: "*Behold, we go up to Jerusalem and all things shall be accomplished, which were written by the prophets concerning the Son of man. For He shall be delivered to the gentiles, and shall be mocked and scourged and spit upon. And after they have scourged Him, they will put*

Him to death; and the third day He shall rise again." (Luke 18, 31–33.) We know how exactly this prediction was fulfilled, even to its slightest details. Jesus also foretold His betrayal by Judas, the flight of the disciples at the moment of His arrest, the threefold denial of Peter, the descent of the Holy Ghost, the miracles which His Apostles and their disciples were to perform; events all literally fulfilled, as the Gospel narrative testifies. But let us dwell at greater length on the prophecies that were to be accomplished at a more *remote* period of time, and which were to embrace, as it were, all future ages, even to the consummation of the world.

II. Destruction of Jerusalem and Dispersion of the Jewish People. **A.** On many occasions and in the most explicit manner Jesus foretold the calamities that threatened Jerusalem in the near future: the siege of that city and the complete ruin of its temple. Our Lord had just said that of the temple there would not remain a stone upon a stone. "*Master,*" His disciples said to Him, "*when shall these things be?*" Jesus answered: "*Amen, I say to you, that this generation shall not pass, until all these things be done.*" (Mark 13, 30.) "*But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons, dragging you before kings and governors, for my name's sake. And it shall happen unto you for a testimony.*" (Luke 21, 12–13.) "*And when He drew near, seeing the city, He wept over it, saying: . . . For the days shall come upon thee; and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side, and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee, and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone: because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation.*" (Luke 19, 41–44.) "*And they shall fall by the edge of the sword; and shall be led away captives into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the gentiles. . . . Amen, I say to you, this generation shall not pass away, till all things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but by words shall not pass away.*" (Luke 21, 24, 32, 33.) Everyone knows of the complete fulfillment of these predic-

tions. If we are to accept the account of Flavius Josephus, a contemporary Jewish historian, and an eyewitness of those terrible times, nearly a million of men perished by the sword, fire or famine. He does not think, he says, that since the beginning of the world any other city ever suffered as much as Jerusalem. It is known that Titus had ordered under the severest penalties to spare the temple, when, after the taking of the city, the surviving combatants continued to defend themselves with desperate fury. The order was in vain. A soldier, impelled, said Josephus, by a divine inspiration, threw into it a burning brand, and of the temple there remained only a mass of ashes and ruins. The catastrophe was so unexpected and so complete, that the conquerors could not but acknowledge and proclaim the intervention of the Divinity, the instrument of whose vengeance they had been. As historians tell us, eleven hundred thousand Jews lost their lives during the siege; ninety-seven thousand were sold as slaves. Such was the end of the Hebrew nation. The temple, the sacrifices, the legal priesthood, the distinction of tribes, all disappeared before the sword of Titus, who acknowledged himself to be the instrument of the divine chastisement inflicted on that obstinate people. Thus were the predictions of Our Lord concerning the utter destruction of Jerusalem entirely fulfilled. It was a manifest punishment of the crime of deicide, which the Jews had committed thirty-seven years before, and of their obstinate rejection of the promised Messias. And here we cannot help admiring and thanking Divine Providence for having saved by a special protection from innumerable dangers the Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, that Christians might have in him an unexceptionable witness of the entire fulfillment of the divine prophecies concerning the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem; a writer that cannot in the least be suspected of partiality for the Christians, since he was a Jew, firmly attached to his religion, his nation and country. The reader is referred to the following authors: Flavius Josephus, "History of the Jewish Wars," translated by William Wharton, Books IV and VII; Darras, "General History of the Catholic Church,"

vol. I, pp. 51–52; Fredet, "Modern History," edition 1910; Vespasian, pp. 44–51, and his valuable notes on the historian Josephus and the apostate Emperor Julian, p. 703.

The Jews, who had remained in Judea, having risen in arms, the Emperor Adrian, determined to put an end to rebellions, sent forth a powerful army, which exterminated six hundred thousand men and dispersed the remainder. They were forbidden ever after to approach Jerusalem, which thenceforward was called by the name of Elia Capitolina.

This was not all. It was necessary that the word of the Savior concerning this great event should receive a yet more solemn confirmation. The wicked apostate Emperor Julian ordered the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem, with the intention of contradicting and disproving the truth of the divine prediction. This is attested by the historian Socrates, and by St. Ambrose, St. John Chrysostom, St. Gregory Nazianzen. The same fact is also affirmed by the rationalist historian Gibbon, who acknowledges it with ill grace. The historical event is also admitted by Ammian Marcellinus, a friend of the Emperor and an officer of the imperial army, whose testimony is undeniable and beyond all suspicion of partiality. "Whilst Alipius," says this pagan historian, "assisted by the governor of the province, was urging on the work with tireless energy, formidable globes of fire arose from the midst of the foundations; they frequently exploded over the workmen, wounding many of them; sometimes they made the ground unapproachable; finally this conquering fire, continuing to hurl itself with fierceness upon the workmen as if resolved to disperse them, compelled them to abandon the undertaking." The only result of this attempt was that, by excavating the foundations of the new temple, which they intended to erect, they completed the work of destroying the foundations of the old temple: thus was fulfilled to the letter the prophecy of Our Blessed Savior announcing that there should not remain a *stone upon a stone.* (Luke 19, 44.) Concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple, it is interesting to read the work of Franz de Champagny: "Rome et la Judée" (Rome and Judea), and as to the attempt of

Julian the Apostate, the work of de Broglie: "L'Eglise et l'empire au IV^e^ siècle," t. 4 (The Church and the Empire during the IV Century, vol. 4).

That this attempt of the wicked apostate Emperor Julian entirely failed is so certain and a fact so well established, that it is impossible for any rational, fair-minded man to deny it. Hence the learned Warburton, in his dissertation on this subject, was fully justified in saying that the defeat of Julian's attempt by fire and earthquakes stands forth in a full blaze of evidence, and is as incontestable as any event mentioned in history. Hence it must be said that the man who voluntarily shuts his eyes against such light deserves to be abandoned with the apostate Julian to his own obduracy, as to an equally just and rigorous punishment. (See Fredet, "Modern History," note p. 709.)

244. **B.** We know how the prediction as to *the dispersion of the Jews* has been *verified.* When the individuals forming a nation separate and go to live amidst other nations, it does not require much time to effect a complete mingling of races. Contrary to this law of history, the people of Israel, though dispersed throughout the earth, has continued as a *race apart,* thus remaining, in spite of itself, a perpetual witness of the fulfillment of the prophecies and of the curse which hangs over this deicide people. "God," says Bossuet, "has found the way, and in the whole world there is no other similar example, of preserving the Jews outside of their own country, and notwithstanding their ruin and dispersion, even longer than the nations that conquered them. We see no surviving descendants of the ancient Assyrians, nor of the Medes and Persians, neither of the Greeks, nor even part of the ancient Romans. Their vestiges have been lost and they are confounded with other races. The Jews, who have been the prey of these ancient races so celebrated in history, have outlived all their conquerors, and God in preserving them keeps us in expectation of what He wishes yet to do with the unfortunate remains of this people once so favored by Him. Yet their hardness of heart contributes to the salvation of the Gentiles and gives them the benefit of finding, in hands not open to

suspicion, the Scriptures that have foretold Jesus Christ, His doctrines, His life, His miracles, His passion and death; His glorious resurrection and the establishment of His Church. (Discourse on Universal History, "Discours sur l'histoire universelle," 2nd pt. xx-xxii.)

245. III. Persecutions. *"You,"* said Christ to His Apostles, *"shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth."* (Acts 1, 8.) Whilst foretelling to the disciples their success in the apostolate, Jesus Christ announced to them at the same time that they would be hated and persecuted because of His name: *"If the world hate you, know ye, that it hath hated me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore, the world hateth you. Remember my word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. . . . But all these things they will do to you for my name's sake."* (John 15, 18, 21.) . . . *"Behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves . . . but beware of men. For they will deliver you up in councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And you shall be brought before governors and before kings for my sake."* (Matt. 10, 16–18.) *"Blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for my sake; be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven. For so they persecuted the prophets that were before you."* Matt. 5, 11–12.

This was the prediction. The mere reading of the Acts of the Apostles shows its perfect fulfillment. We see the Apostles reviled, dragged before the tribunals, thrown into prison, scourged and yet rejoicing at this shameful and cruel treatment because *"they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus."* (Acts 5, 41.) The persecution of the just still goes on in our day.

246. IV. Charity among Christians. *"I give you a new commandment: That you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men*

know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another." (John 13, 34–35.)

Jesus Christ has therefore foretold that His Church would be distinguished by a boundless charity, by an admirable union of or fusion of hearts and souls. Now what does history teach us? From the first appearance of the new religion among men, people recognized Christians by this sign, that they had one heart and one soul. In the course of centuries the world has always seen arising a multitude of heroes of Christian charity, who have zealously performed all the works of corporal and spiritual mercy, and striven to soothe and relieve the sufferings and the sorrows of mankind. This we shall prove more amply in Part X of our Course, 2nd vol.

We must here refer our readers to an excellent work on this subject from the pen of his Eminence, the late Cardinal Baluffi. It is entitled "The Charity of the Church a Proof of Her Divinity." Due appreciation of this most valuable production can be had from the very judicious preface or introduction to this work by Denis Gargan, D.D., from which we quote some few extracts. "The author's narrative is complete in all its details. His treatment of the subject is masterful, evincing in him a combination of those high intellectual gifts and varied literary attainments, which are required for successfully dealing with a vast and weighty question, such as the present one. His argument, resting on the witnesses of more than eighteen centuries, is irrefragable and imparts to the work an abiding interest and permanent value. By the charity of the Church the author means her beneficent action in relieving the miseries and eradicating the vices of mankind, her untiring zeal in the performance of works of spiritual and corporal mercy; her constant inculcation of the observance of the commandment, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself'—her efficiency through Popes, Bishops, Clergy, Councils, Religious Orders and pious confraternities in emancipating slaves, redeeming captives, restraining tyranny, elevating and ennobling the condition of woman, protecting orphans, establishing asylums for foundlings, for the indigent and infirm, reclaiming sinners, converting heretics, preaching the Gospel

to pagan nations, mitigating the evils of war, famine and pestilence, promoting education, and introducing a genuine civilization by raising up what was fallen, making new what was old, and re-establishing all things through Our Lord Jesus Christ by copying His doctrines and inculcating the imitation of His examples."

V. This would be the place to mention the striking predictions concerning the establishing of Christianity and its perpetuation throughout the centuries; but we shall treat this question whilst setting forth the arguments of the next proof.

Conclusion. The fulfillment then of these predictions authorizes us to conclude that the mission of Jesus Christ is divine and that the religion He came to establish is also divine.

This conclusion imposes itself with all the more force from the fact that many of these predictions have been made *directly* with the avowed purpose of confirming the truth of the divine mission of Jesus Christ. Such is the prediction which foretells His resurrection: In speaking of the Pharisees and the incredulous Jews, who were then consulting among themselves how to ensnare Him in His speech, Jesus said: "*An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign: and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights; so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.*" (Matt. 12, 39–40.) Here Christ explicitly foretold His forthcoming resurrection, prefigured by the preservation of Jonas in the body of the marine monster. Such also are the predictions relating to the betrayal by Judas, and the persecutions which were to afflict the Church. "*At present I tell you before it come to pass: that when it shall come to pass, you may believe that I am he* (the Messias)." (John 13, 19.)

§ VI. Sixth Proof

The Miraculous Establishment of the Religion of Jesus Christ and Its Perpetuation Throughout the Centuries

247. This is also a miracle, but a miracle of the moral order. A miracle of the moral order may be thus defined: an effect produced by human liberty and derogating from a law of free human nature, so much so that it requires an immediate and extraordinary intervention of God. As the physical order has its laws so also has the moral order. It is, for instance, a law of the moral order that a great multitude of men should not change their convictions, conduct, habits, manners in a few days, especially when all the motives of passion, self-interest and influence unite in opposing such change.

God intervenes in the moral order, as in the physical order, in two ways; the first ordinary, normal and simply providential; the other, extraordinary, exceptional and truly miraculous. That there be, strictly speaking, a *miracle* in the moral order, it is necessary that there should be a true derogation from an assured law of the moral order; a simple *providential* direction of events is not enough, even if it be more or less wonderful.

I—Establishment and Propagation of Christianity

248. **A.** It should be above all incumbent upon us, to prove *the fact itself* of this rapid propagation. But this fact is so incontestable, founded as it is on so many monuments of antiquity, sacred and profane, that unbelievers themselves do not dream of denying it; they merely endeavor to impair its force by striving to explain it by natural causes. We shall, notwithstanding, cite some historical testimonies.

The Apostles had not yet run their course, when St. Paul was already writing to the Romans (1, 8): *"Your faith is spoken of in the whole world,"* and to the Colossians (1, 23): *"The Gospel which you have heard, which is preached in all the creation that is under heaven, whereof I, Paul, am made a*

minister." One hundred and thirty-four years after Christ, St. Justin, martyr (A.D. 167), counted among the faithful many savage nations. "We are but of yesterday," said in his turn Tertullian (A.D. 240) in his "Apologia" (ch. 37), addressed to the magistrates of the empire, "and we fill your towns, your islands, even your camps and your palaces, the senate and the forum; we have only left you your temples." Among the Parthians, the Medes, the Elamites, among the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Armenia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia-Minor, Egypt, Cyrene, among the diverse races of the Getulions and the Mauri, everywhere Christians were found in the early centuries of the Christian Era. In the year 112 Pliny the younger (Epist. 97), writing to the emperor Trajan, who had named him governor of Bithynia, expressed himself as considerably alarmed at the prodigious number of Christians in his province: "The contagion of the Christian superstition," says he, "is no longer confined to the towns; it has invaded the villages and the country, and has seized upon people of every age, every rank and sex. Our temples are almost entirely abandoned, and the ceremonies in honor of our gods utterly neglected." "This race of Christians is everywhere," says Seneca. Concerning the rapid extension of Christianity, Renan himself acknowledges that "in one hundred and fifty years the prophecy of Jesus had been truly fulfilled. The grain of mustard seed had become a tree, which had begun to cover the earth." (See Paul Allard, *Histoire des persécutions pendant les trois premiers siècles*, History of the persecutions of the first three centuries.)

B. A propagation so rapid and so universal as this, effected in less than three hundred years, throughout the then-known world, cannot be looked upon as a purely *natural* event. We shall become convinced of this, especially if we consider the *principal circumstances* of this propagation. From the human point of view the new religion was meeting with nothing but unsurmountable obstacles. It had against it:

249. 1. Its Own Preachers. They were neither orators, nor philosophers, nor men learned in the secrets of science and of politics, but poor Jews despised by other nations, Galileans

held in contempt by the Jews themselves; with few exceptions they were men of the lowest class of society, without education, or wealth, or any prestige in the eyes of the world, possessing no natural endowment that might accredit their mission to the peoples, the heathen priests, the philosophers, the magistrates and rulers of the earth. On the contrary, everything about them was calculated to discredit their doctrine and bring about the failure of their project.

250. 2. The Doctrine Which Was Preached. There might have been some hope of success if the new religion taught a doctrine favorable to human passion. But no! It was no less opposed to the depraved instincts of the heart than it was repugnant to the prejudices of the intellect. By its mysteries it humbled the pride of men; by its severe and inflexible morality it ran counter to their corrupt inclinations. What a contrast between the licentious lives led by the pagans and the virtuous, holy life which it sought to impose upon them! To be modest even unto the extent of self-abasement, mild, patient and charitable even to loving our enemies as ourselves, and to pardon the most flagrant injuries, to be detached from the goods of this earth so far as to prefer poverty to opulence, to enjoin such chastity as to repel the very thought of evil, to be faithful to one's belief even unto death—this is what was required from men who under paganism could satisfy their passions with unbridled license and give themselves up to the most shameful debauchery, and in this only be following the example of and acting under the patronage of their gods.

251. 3. The End Which It Sought to Attain. Nothing less was intended than to replace the law of Moses, so ancient and so justly venerated, by a new law, the work of an individual supposed to be a mere man, whom the Synagogue had put to a shameful death. It aimed at destroying throughout the whole earth idolatry, which had reigned for so many centuries; idolatry, which bore a national character, which passed for a social necessity and was intimately connected with all the acts of life, both private and public; idolatry, in fine, which was maintained by all human power and sustained by

the civil government, which was the greatest and the most absolute that the world had ever seen. For all this it was intended to substitute a worship detested by men, which the grave Tacitus reproached with hating the human race; a worship so unreasonable and strange as to enjoin, in addition to the adoration of an invisible God, the worship of a Jew, condemned, at the bidding of the priests and magistrates of his own nation, to an ignominious death! See in the 16th Conference of Lacordaire a statement of the cause of the aversion of statesmen and learned men to the new-born faith.

252. 4. The Times when Christianity Appeared. It was during the age of Augustus and Tiberius, that is to say, in a most polished and enlightened age, but an age, at the same time, most proud and most corrupt; when the Roman Empire was filled with philosophers, orators, poets and historians hostile to the new religion; when Rome, now the queen of nations, was their mistress, domineering over all by laws and customs based upon pagan ideas. The ignorance of the Apostles was therefore in conflict with the science of the greatest geniuses of antiquity, puffed up with inordinate pride at their own learning. (I Cor. 1, 27.)

253. 5. The Violent Persecutions Which the Christian Religion Had to Suffer from Its Very Birth. Far from being favored and protected by public authority, the new doctrine found itself exposed to the hatred of the Synagogue, to the tyranny of emperors and kings, the cruelty of governors and magistrates, the fury of pagan priests, philosophers and people. From the year 64, when the persecution of Nero burst forth, until the edict of Constantine, in the year 313, that is to say, for the space of two and a half centuries, we count ten general persecutions, or persecutions ordered by the emperors, and a great number of local persecutions, which were inflicted upon the Christians, either by virtue of unrevoked edicts, or because they were excited by the hatred of governors, magistrates and priests of the idols. As a modern writer, Julius E. Devos, wisely says in his work "The Three Ages of Progress": "It must be admitted that the most signal victory of Christianity was its complete triumph over

Roman power. The Roman Empire had conquered the world, and when it beheld itself confronted by a mysterious rival, it girded itself to conquer also the new religion. There never was a more unequal contest. On one side there was a crucified Jew, who claimed the prerogatives of the Supreme and only God; on the other there was a haughty people, which had conquered Judea and all the other civilized countries. On the one side there was the infant Church, whose cradle stood on the very domain of the enemy; on the other the giant and colossal empire attempting to smother the tender infant under its immense weight. On the one side there was the fisherman of the little lake of Galilee, who meant to erect his throne in the city of the Cæsars; on the other these mighty rulers and the high priests of the gods, whom the pagan nation adored, using all their power to maintain the imperial religion, and to crush the faith preached by the obscure carpenter of Nazareth. The struggle lasted three hundred years, and ten times the persecuted Church seemed wounded unto death. But the crucified Nazarene and the Church founded by Him, proved stronger than the conquerors of the world. The heathen deities were driven from their temples, and Peter, the first Vicar of Christ, raised his throne in the palace of the Cæsars."

254. Conclusion. The argument which we have just set forth is as simple as it is conclusive; it rests on an historical truth, striking and undeniable, and it requires no laborious critical examination to grasp its full import. It is certain that before the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, the name of Christian was absolutely unknown; paganism reigned supreme in the midst of a most corrupt society; the cross, a form of death reserved to slaves, was the supreme sign of infamy. And yet, from the time of Constantine, in spite of most formidable opposition, and of long and cruel persecution, Christianity at first preached by Jews, obscure disciples of a supposed crucified criminal, was triumphant even at Athens and at Rome; and behold, the Cross is transformed into an object of adoration and love, it adorned the crown of kings and has become the emblem of honor and glory among the

most civilized peoples of the earth. The miracle is palpable, and it is with perfect confidence that we may say: the hand of God is there. As Chateaubriand says: "He who could cause a cross to be adored must have been, we may swear to it, nothing less than a God." The celebrated dilemma of St. Augustine is well known; either the religion of Jesus Christ has triumphed over every obstacle, *through miracles*, and then we must acknowledge it to be divine; or else it was established *without miracles*, and then this conversion of the world without miracles was in itself *the greatest of miracles* (n. 214).

255. Objections. Unbelief, obstinate by nature, has not failed to make the greatest efforts to lessen the effect of this irrefutable proof.

1. According to the historian Gibbon (d. 1794) and his followers, the spreading of the Gospel is explained quite naturally by the unity of the Roman Empire, the universal use of the Greek and Roman languages, the construction of the great military roads, the enthusiasm of the masses for what was new and marvelous, the want which the world felt for a purer morality, the charity of the first Christians, persecution itself, which is said to spread a doctrine rather than to destroy it.

Answer. We do not think it necessary to refute one by one these objections, specious enough in appearance, but inconclusive in reality. We shall simply say that there is not one of the explanations imagined by unbelief that is not a manifest contradiction of historic truth, or that does not contradict itself, or take the effect for the cause by attributing the rapid propagation of the Gospel to effects *which it had itself produced*, and which are shown to be radically insufficient to account for the marvelous results achieved.

We are, however, far from pretending that Christianity met with nothing but opposition and obstacles of every sort. We acknowledge that Divine Providence, which "*reacheth from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly*" (Wisd. 8, 1), had in advance made of the Roman people a precursor, entrusted, unknown to itself, with the task of pre-

paring the ways for the new religion. The unity and peace of the Roman Empire could indeed assist in the spread of the faith, but this unity itself, this peace and comparative facility of intercourse among the nations furnished means and resources *much more serviceable to the crowned persecutors* than to the defenseless victims of their hatred. It is moreover evident that all this would only lessen the difficulties without being efficient causes of success. As to a pretended movement of the multitude and their anxiety to receive the new Gospel, who can seriously admit such a supposition, when we bear in mind the fact that it was here a question of accepting a doctrine imposing on men proud and licentious, dogmas impenetrable to reason and a morality most austere and diametrically opposed to human passions. And forsooth, did the loss of property, of liberty, of life itself, to which the adherent members of the Church were liable, offer any great attraction in those days to the masses of the people? And then, if, as claimed, the minds of men were favorably disposed towards Christianity, how was it that for three centuries the pagans shed torrents of Christian blood? (n. 253.)

In fine, if there be circumstances, which may have favored the spread of the Gospel, it is most evident that the result bore no proportion whatever to the *human means* put into operation. For it must not be forgotten that according to the hypothesis of naturalism Jesus Christ was only *an ordinary man,* a simple tradesman without education or human resources; that the few disciples around Him were poor like Himself, despised, ignorant, and, in the supposition of our enemies, without a Divine mission or supernatural powers. It is to these men that this Jew of Galilee gave orders to spread themselves over the whole earth, in order to substitute for the venerated law of Moses on the one hand and the all-powerful idolatry on the other a doctrine of His own invention, contrary to all the evil inclinations of the human heart, and which ran counter to all social traditions. Let us for a moment imagine such a project to be formed in *our own days,* when means of communication are so easy; even admitting the new Apostles to possess all the prestige of learning and elo-

quence, of wealth and power, who would venture to say that their undertaking would be crowned with success or that such success would be durable? Admitting even that their doctrine of purely human origin, and opposed to the passions, had succeeded by the mere attraction of its novelty in producing a certain enthusiasm in one or two nations, how long would this enthusiasm last? The study of the human heart and of history proves that an unreflecting infatuation has only a precarious existence and a short one indeed; in other words, it lasts as long as passion or self-interest find their profit in doctrinal novelty. (See M. Lamy: "Examen critique de l'ouvrage de Renan: Les apôtres," Critical examination of Renan's work: The Apostles.)

256. 2. Islamism was also propagated with great rapidity.

Answer. Comparison here is not possible or, as the Schoolmen used to say, "Non datur paritas." Whilst the establishment and propagation of Christianity cannot be explained without the intervention of God, we can see clearly that Islamism had in its favor everything necessary to establish itself and to spread. Mahomet, a man of genius, who stopped at nothing, neither imposture, cruelty nor immorality, reduced his religion to a few external practices; prayer, fasting, alms-giving, ablutions, the pilgrimage to Mecca and the holy war. He who acquitted himself of those practices could permit himself everything. By a religion of this sort he satisfied at the same time the good and the bad sides of human nature. Man does not like to be entirely without religion, but he would wish at the same time to give himself up with impunity to all his passions. Now Mahometanism, by its dogma of the unity of God, which satisfies reason, was far better and a great deal more acceptable than polytheism, from which it withdrew the people and recruited its ranks. And on the other hand, by the absence of mystery imposed upon the intelligence, by the moral disorder, which it permitted on earth, by the sensual pleasures which it promised beyond the tomb, it easily drew to itself and retained proselytes. Moreover, the union in the same hand of both the civil and the religious power, the propagation of the faith by the sword, the

dogma of fatalism, the division of the spoils in their so-called sacred wars, paradise promised to every warrior who might fall in the fight, all these inducements were of a nature to arouse the fanatic spirit of the Mussulmans and to inspire into them wonderful courage and desperate daring. Christianity, on the contrary, unprovided as it was with any of these human means, had to propagate itself in spite of hostile passions, which it opposed, and in spite of violence from every side. This made Pascal say: "If Mahomet chose the means of *succeeding humanly,* it must be said that Jesus Christ chose the means of *perishing humanly;* and in place of concluding from the success of Mahomet that Jesus Christ also could not fail to succeed, it should be said, on the contrary, that as Mahomet has succeeded, so Christianity should have perished, if it had not been sustained by a divine force."

Here the reader desirous of a fuller development of this subject is referred to the following works:

"The Trials of the Church, or the Persecutors of Religion," by Rev. W. Gleeson, Rector of St. Anthony's Church, East Oakland, California, two volumes; "De mortibus persecutorum" (On the death of persecutors), a work in 52 chapters, by Lactantius Firmianus (d. about A.D. 330); see a complete account of this author in Bernard Schmid, "Manual of Patrology"; Asa H. Craig, "Christian Persecutions, Being a Historical Exposition of the Principal Catholic Events from the Christian Era to the Present Time, 1899."

II—Miracle of the Preservation of Christianity through the Centuries

257. Not only the religion founded by Jesus Christ and preached by His Apostles, under most unfavorable circumstances, could not, without the help of God, implant itself in the world, but it could not have been able to persevere in its existence without *a manifestly divine intervention.*

History in hand, writers have often shown the causes of decay and ruin which would inevitably have brought about the destruction of the work of Christ, if that work had not been divine. We can scarcely spare the space to enumerate

the incessant and terrible wars, which the history of the world shows us to have been waged against it.

"Hardly had the Church of Christ been born," says Father Olivier, S. J., in his beautiful conference upon the establishment of Christianity, "when paganism drew the sword against its life, which never ceased to fell to the ground numberless lives during the space of three hundred years. In fact it stopped its murderous work only when its edge was blunted and its wielders powerless. The trial of violent persecution was soon followed by the more formidable and insidious trial of schism and heresy, rendered still more dangerous by the breaking up of the Roman Empire under the assaults of the barbarians that invaded it, and by the mortal struggle that Christianity had to sustain in its defense of liberty and civilization against fanaticism, ignorance and barbarism. Soon after arose Mahometanism (A.D. 622), which, encircling Europe with a band of iron, endeavored to crush the Church by its formidable power. Peace itself did not leave the Church free from sorrow; the powers of the world abusing the influence given them by the protection they granted to the Church, introduced into its bosom corruption and simony; they went so far as to enslave the Papacy by forcing her to transfer her seat from Rome to Avignon in France. Then came the last trial, the most formidable of all, and which endures unto our own day, the revolt and apostasy of Christian peoples. Prepared from long before by the Catharists, the Waldenses, the Albigenses and other heretics, restrained for a while by the crusades and by the efforts of the sons of St. Francis and St. Dominic, the revolt draws new vigor from the imprudent ambition of Philip the Fair, in the great schism of the West and in the attempts of Wicliff and Huss. Soon, under the violent blasts of Luther, the rebellion falls like a tempest upon the Church of Jesus Christ. To accomplish its work of destruction, it assumes, according to its needs, every form, it takes every name, and exhausts every means. As Protestantism, it fights with sword and pen; as Philosophism, it resorts to sarcasm and calumny; as bloodthirsty revolution, it organizes the drownings of Nantes and

erects the guillotine; as a brutal and armed force, it invades the Pontifical States and lays sacrilegious hands upon the Vicar of Christ.

"These are the facts as history presents them. And yet, what has been the result? Whilst philosophic schools, kingdoms and empires, in fine, all human institutions, have disappeared, one after another, even when everything seemed to point to their triumph, the Church has stood forth unshaken; it has even come out purer and stronger from the numberless trials and conflicts, to which Providence has permitted it to be subjected. Thus have been verified the words of St. Augustine: 'The Church may be attacked, but cannot be conquered—*impugnari potest, expugnari non potest.*'"

Remarks. To these facts, so eloquent in themselves, we shall add two remarks, which will enable the reader to appreciate their value all the more.

258. 1. Not only has the Church existed during nineteen centuries, but she has, moreover, always remained invariably the same. *Semper eadem* is her proud but well-merited boast. She has preserved the same doctrine, the same constitution, the same form of government, the same sacraments, the same worship. This is a fact, unique in all history, a fact which has no parallel in the annals of mankind. It is all the more marvelous in this that civil governments succeed in maintaining themselves for a few centuries only by making concessions and compromises with the enemies of political order and by accommodating their constitutions to the necessities and often to the prejudices of the age. It is otherwise with the Church. She has always remained inflexible and invariable in everything that is essential to her existence and the exercise of her ministry. Here we deem it advisable to refer our readers to the able treatise published by Rev. D. McErlane, of the Society of Jesus, entitled "The Church of Christ the Same Forever," B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Mo.

2. This perpetuation of the work of Jesus Christ had been *foretold* on many occasions in the most explicit manner. "*Behold, I am with you all days until the consummation of*

the world" (Matt. 28, 20), said Jesus to His disciples on sending them forth into all parts of the world. And addressing the Apostle, whom He had chosen to be His first Vicar and representative, He said to him: *"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell"*—that is to say, the infernal powers and all the violence and iniquity of men—*"shall not prevail against it."* (Matt. 16, 18.) *"In the world you shall have distress, but have confidence; I have overcome the world."* (John 16, 33.) What was to be the result of the divine assistance so clearly and emphatically promised to His Church? It was what history proves to have actually occurred, a complete victory over all the enemies of Christian faith. We are here again in presence of a *double miracle,* the *prediction* and its literal *fulfillment.*

Conclusion. From what we have set forth in the preceding paragraph, there follows an evident conclusion and it is this. If the Church had been a purely human work she would, centuries ago, have ceased to exist, and would be remembered now simply as one of the decayed monuments of the past; time alone would have been enough to bring about her dissolution.

Here our thoughtful reader is, no doubt, reminded of the incident recorded by St. Luke in the fifth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Shortly after Our Lord's resurrection Peter and other Apostles, because they were preaching Christ's Gospel, were arrested by the Jews and led to prison; and it had been determined to put them to death. At this juncture, as St. Luke informs us, *"one in the council rising up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, respected by all the people, . . . said to them: Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves, what you intend to do as touching these men. . . . And now, therefore, I say to you, refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this council or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it."* (Acts 5, 34–35; 38–39.) Now we may complete the argument by saying the experience of nineteen centuries of unceasing conflicts and perpetual victories proves that the Church founded by Christ and propagated by His Apostles

has not been destroyed, therefore, we are fully justified in concluding that *it is* the work of God.

If the Church of Christ, which we shall prove further on in Part VII to be identical with the Catholic Church, has conquered time, which destroys everything; if she is still standing, ever drawing new vigor even from the struggles she had to encounter, this is owing to the fact that the hand of God sustains her in all her trials through the flight of centuries. To show how legitimate is this consequence it is enough to set side by side these two equally wonderfully and undeniable facts, viz., on one hand *the rapid propagation* of Christianity and *its marvelous preservation* unto our day; on the other hand, the *absolute insufficiency* of all human means at the disposal of the new religion to meet the powerful and numerous enemies whom it had to encounter. Common sense alone suffices to show that *such effects* cannot be due to the wisdom or prudence of men, but that they absolutely require *the all-powerful intervention* of God.

§ VII. Seventh Proof

The Testimony of the Martyrs

259. To appreciate properly the force of the argument in favor of the divinity of our Faith drawn from the testimony of the martyrs it is important to consider:

1. *The very great number* of these martyrs. From Nero to Constantine, that is, during two and a half centuries, Christianity was subjected to the most cruel persecutions. *A very great number of people,* of either sex, and of every grade of society, bravely shed their blood both during the ten *general* and the local persecutions that raged in those days. Like many of his predecessors Diocletian had so terribly persecuted the Christians that he flattered himself with the proud boast of having utterly destroyed them; witness the medal which he caused to be struck as a record of the supposed event bearing the inscription: *Nomine christiano deleto,* The Christian name being destroyed.

And there were other persecutions besides that which raged in the Roman Empire. In Persia, for instance, during 37 years, the cruel King Sapor waged such an implacable war against the Christians, that the historian Sozomenes testifies that not less than sixteen thousand Christians were murdered for the Faith, without counting the multitudes of other victims, whose name and number are known to the omniscient God alone.

2. *The diversity of social conditions of the martyrs.* Masters and servants, rich and poor, men and women, children and old men, nobles, soldiers, philosophers, all rivaled each other in genuine ardor for the confession of the Faith of Jesus Christ.

3. *The barbarity of the tortures to which the martyrs were subjected.* These were so great in number that volumes have been filled with their description; so horrible in their character that we cannot but shudder at the mere account of the torments, which the Christians were condemned to endure; *exquisitissimis pœnis* (most exquisite tortures), says Tacitus (A.D. 117). After enumerating some frightful tortures inflicted on the martyrs, Seneca (A.D. 65) says that "they suffered everything which human barbarity could invent; and incomparably more cruel were the Persian persecutions."

4. *The manner* in which they bore these torments. In the midst of most atrocious sufferings they displayed the greatest calmness and the most astounding gentleness. Nothing in their conduct resembled fanaticism, frenzy or the spirit of arrogant defiance; and even on the scaffold and in the midst of the flames, they poured forth their prayers to heaven in behalf of their tormentors.

5. The striking *miracles* which frequently took place on the occasion of the execution of these men, condemned to death in hatred of Jesus Christ, whose Divinity they were proclaiming at the risk of their lives.

6. *The happy fruits* produced by the martyrdom of Christians. The number of conversions brought about by these triumphant deaths must have been very great indeed to justify the language of Tertullian saying: "The greater

the number amongst us that perish by your sword, the more we multiply; the blood of martyrs is the seed of new Christians." At the sight of the *immovable calmness and the joyous serenity* which shone on the countenance of the martyrs in the midst of the most frightful torments, it happened more than once that the executioners and the tyrants themselves embraced the Faith of their victims.

As to the facts referred to above, the reader might profitably consult any general history of the Church (Rohrbacher, Henrion, Hergenroether, Darras, etc., the "Actes des Martyrs" (Acts of the Martyrs), edited with so much critical learning by Dom Ruinart, and "Histoire des persécutions pendant les trois premiers siècles de l'Eglise," by Paul Allard; also "Les Persécutions et les Martyrs aux premiers siècles," by de Blant.

Additional Considerations on the Significance of Martyrdom

The early Christians instructed by the Apostles themselves, or by their immediate successors, esteemed it the highest evidence of God's favor when they were counted worthy to suffer for faith, truth and righteousness. The disciples of Jesus Christ learned to regard it as their proper calling to be likened to their suffering, dying Savior and model in their trials, imprisonments, torments and death. They knew that, besides confessing with their lips, they were expected to be prepared to confess by deeds: that the doctrine of the Cross would arouse hatred and fierce opposition from every side. They realized that the prediction made of Jesus their Master, "*This child is set for a sign which shall be contradicted,*" (Luke 2, 34), was to be the lot of His followers. The critical moment when the Christian had to choose between denying his profession, or dying for it, was considered as the paramount occasion of giving a solemn testimony of loyalty to his Redeemer, and of showing to the world what power lay in his hopes of everlasting reward. And thus grew up the idea of Christian martyrdom as the noblest sacrifice bearing witness to the Faith.

Let us, however, remember, says St. Augustine, that it is not the mere infliction of torments that makes martyrdom, but rather the cause or motive for which it is undergone. In his comment on the Sermon on the Mount he writes: "Christ does not simply say, blessed are they that suffer persecution, but He added, for justice' sake." (Matt. 5, 10; I Pet. 4, 15.) Etymologically a martyr is a witness. Those brave heroes were not witnesses to simple views, but to facts and doctrines. This was what Christ meant when He said to His disciples: "*You shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the utmost part of the earth.*" (Acts 1, 8.) The martyrs then were witnesses to the Christian fact, the existence and heavenly origin of the religion of Jesus Christ and all His teachings, confirming their belief by the greatest of sacrifices, that of their life blood.

The first heathen persecution, to which the princes of the Apostolic college St. Peter and Paul (A.D. 67) fell victims, was the baptism of blood of the Roman Church. It befitted her dignity and importance to shine forth as the first and most severely tried of all, thus exhibiting to the Christian world a brilliant example of dauntless courage and unconquerable fortitude. Numerous were the accusers of the early Christians, partly heathen, partly Jewish. Under Nero they were bitterly hated by the people as adherents to what they called a new criminal superstition, an abominable and corrupting misbelief. They were held guilty of what were termed shocking iniquities, as open despisers of the gods and enemies of the human race. Hence the following heart-breaking scenes, described by the Roman historian Tacitus (Annals, XV, 44) need not surprise us. A frightful conflagration, which broke out the year (A.D. 64) had laid in ashes and destroyed a large portion of Rome. As emperor Nero was commonly believed to have been its author, terrified at the popular hatred, he looked around for persons on whose shoulders the guilt of incendiarism could be laid: it was probably Jewish influence that suggested the Christians.

A large number of them, *ingens multitudo,* says Tacitus,

who confessed themselves Christians, were seized and summarily executed in a body. Some were crucified; some were sewn into animals' skins and thrown into the amphitheatre to be torn to pieces and devoured by wild beasts. Some were clothed in dresses dipped into combustible matter and burnt at night as flaming torches along the paths of the imperial gardens. Though the charge of incendiarism was generally regarded as false, yet the started persecution was extended to the provinces and continued unabated, simply because, through the universal hatred, the Christians were judged worthy of death, and their belief was to be exterminated. Similar cruelties prevailed during the three hundred years of persecution throughout the Roman empire and elsewhere, wherever Christians were to be found. The strongest evidence of their deep rooted faith is the fact that no sufferings, however intense, succeeded in eradicating it from their heart. They were burned alive, frozen to death, immersed in caldrons of boiling oil, pitch, molten lead or in quicklime. Some were enclosed in sacks with poisonous serpents, or shut up in dark dungeons to be devoured by rats, which found in them the only food for their voracious, maddened hunger. It is impossible to read without a thrill of emotion the description of the frightful agonies endured by the confessors of Christ. These descriptions we find not in legendary stories, but in authentic documents still preserved in the pages of the ancient Greek and Roman classics and in the reports of the judicial processes, which the laws of the Roman empire required should be carefully registered and preserved in the national archives.

260. Conclusion. From the testimony of the martyrs there flows a two-fold proof of the *divinity* of the Religion for which they gave up their life.

1. A proof of *Divine authority.* So many martyrs, of every sex and age and condition in society, in all the countries of the then known world, could never have suffered with such admirable patience not only a prompt and easy death, but often slow and refined tortures, *if God had not sustained them* with His power; consequently, *if their Faith had not been*

divine. Such moral force *does not belong to human nature.* It must not be forgotten, morever, that the sufferings were purely *voluntary,* for, to escape them, they had only to apostatize. The constancy of the martyrs is therefore truly a *miracle* of the moral order.

2. A proof of *human authority.* In all tribunals of the world proof by witnesses is admitted in all questions of fact; how indeed could facts be proven otherwise than by testimony? Now, the martyrs went to death, not to defend speculative opinions, but *to attest the Faith and the truth of Christian revelation as well as all the sensible, visible facts that demonstrate its divine origin,* that is to say, the miracles performed by Jesus Christ, His superhuman life and death, His resurrection and ascension, the descent of the Holy Ghost, the miracles of the Apostles, the miracles subsequent to their time, those of which the martyrs themselves were witnesses. It is true that it is not an unheard-of thing that a man should die for a false *opinion* considered by him as true; but no man is willing to die in testimony of doubtful facts or of facts which he knows to be untrue. The martyrs of Christianity must therefore have had *very strong proof* of the divinity of their religion; they must have been penetrated with the most profound conviction *as to the reality of the facts* which constitute its foundation, for they sacrificed everything, life itself, to gain the reward which that religion promised them. When we see the Apostles and the first disciples of Christ die as martyrs, after having been ocular witnesses of these facts, when we see so many other Christians in the first centuries shed their blood for the Faith which they had freely embraced, we have the right to repeat the words of Pascal: "I willingly believe histories whose witnesses are ready to die to attest them."

261. Objections. To minimize the force of the argument, which we have drawn from the testimony of martyrs, it has been said: (1) that their number was not as great as we claim; (2) that the motives of the persecutors were political rather than religious; (3) that it was through fanaticism, more than through conviction, that the victims suffered.

262. Answer to the Objection Drawn from the Number of Martyrs. Bayle (A.D. 1706) and other unbelievers have only copied the arguments of the Protestant Dodwell, but they have been careful, and for very good reasons, not to bring forward the triumphant refutation by Macnight and Burnet, and especially that of the learned Benedictine, Dom Ruinart. This would have been all the more just from the fact that Dodwell himself acknowledges that the number of martyrs remains *great enough* to furnish a *striking proof* of the divinity of Christianity. This avowal might be sufficient for us, for the reason that it leaves our argument untouched.

2. On examining the arguments of Dodwell, we perceive that they are all *negative,* that is, arguments drawn from the *silence* of certain authors; they, therefore do not affect our arguments, as these are *positive,* that is to say, based upon authentic testimonies. We shall set forth some of our proofs.

(*a*) Christian tradition always considered the number of martyrs to be very considerable. The language of the ecclesiastical writers of the first five centuries is uniform on this point; in their histories, their homilies, their apologetic works, their various writings, they always assume, or take it for granted, that the persecutions made an innumerable multitude of martyrs. (*b*) Tacitus asserts that under Nero there perished an immense multitude of Christians: *multitudo ingens.* Under Marcus Aurelius, says the historian Eusebius (fourth century), the hatred and the fury of the people caused the death of *an almost infinite number* of martyrs. (*c*) In the ten books composing the history of Eusebius, there is not one in which he does not speak of the persecutions enkindled under the different emperors. In his book on "The Death of Persecutors," Lactantius (A.D. 325), who lived under the persecution of Diocletian, speaks of six emperors, whose tragic deaths seemed to be the effect of divine vengeance. "All the earth was under those tyrants cruelly tormented." He says further, ". . . and with the exception of Gaul alone, the East and the West were ravaged, devoured by three monsters." (*d*) According to tradition, under Diocletian and Maximian, the number of martyrs amounted to *two million.* This perse-

cution was so dreadful that these emperors dared to boast that they *had exterminated* Christianity; *Nomine Christiano deleto; superstitione Christi ubique deleta* (the Christian name being effaced; the superstition of Christ being everywhere effaced); this is what they engraved on their medals. At their accession, Christianity was flourishing throughout the whole empire; they must, therefore, have shed torrents of blood. (*e*) It is true that from the year 64 to the year 313, the Church enjoyed, at times, years of truce, God not being willing to permit, as Origen says, that the race of Christians should be destroyed. Nevertheless, it is a well-known fact, that from Trajan to Septimius Severus (A.D. 96-211), the persecution was continuous in this sense, that it never ceased to rage in some part or other of the empire. After Septimius Severus, the cruel edicts against the Christians were several times revoked; but either on account of popular seditions falsely attributed to them, or through the ill will of the pagan local governors, Christian blood never ceased to flow.

What does the silence of writers, who had no interest in speaking about our martyrs, prove against such arguments as these? As to the question of the number of martyrs the reader would be interested in perusing the pamphlet of Father Houze, S.J.: "Les origines chrétiennes" (Christian origins).

263. Answer to the Second Objection That the Motives of the Persecutors Were Political Rather than Religious. (*a*) If this objection is well founded, how does it happen that the infidel writers, who advance it, do not bring forward any serious argument to support their assertion? If their contention were true, the pagan authors of that time, the official edicts of the persecutors, and the answers of the apologists should have supplied them with a great number of clear and decisive testimonies.

(*b*) In the apologies or defenses which they addressed to *the emperors, to the magistrates, to the whole people,* St. Justin, Athenagoras, Minutius Felix, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen and St. Cyprian *boldly affirm* that there could not be imputed to the Christians either crime, sedition, violation of the civil law and public order; they challenge

them to prove the contrary; they reproach the pagans with being cruel to the innocent, and putting to death peaceful citizens who were submissive to the law, opposed to tumult and sedition, accused merely of refusing to offer incense to false divinities. Now these affirmations *have never met with denial,* their challenge has not been accepted. No doubt, the heads of the empire, Cæsars and Supreme Pontiffs at the same time, might have feared that a change of religion would lessen their prestige; but history proves that this fear had for its sole foundation the introduction of a new religion and *not the pretended crime* of disloyalty to civil rulers. "The Emperor Decius," says St. Cyprian, "would have been less alarmed at the sight of a competitor for the empire than at seeing established in Rome a rival *to his priesthood.*" If the Christians were looked upon as the enemies of the State, it was exclusively for reason of their character as Christians; it was, therefore, for religious motives and not for any offense against the common law of the State.

(c) The declarations *of pagan authors are significant enough.* Tacitus reproached the Christians only with professing a pernicious superstition: *exitiabilis superstitio;* Suetonius asserts that Nero punished the Christians, a sect of perverse and evil superstition: *superstitionis pravæ et maleficæ.* It is in this way that the pagans branded the Christians with a stigma of impiety towards the gods, because they considered them the cause of the public calamities which afflicted the empire. Celsus (A.D. 220), Julian the Apostate (A.D. 363), Libanius (A.D. 395), bring forward no other accusation. Pliny, in his celebrated letter to Trajan (Epist. 97), speaks only of a perverse and excessive superstition: *pravam et immodicam superstitionem.* He declares that he does not know for what crime the Christians are punished; he even makes admissions most creditable and flattering to them, and his praise of their conduct is confirmed by the answer which the emperor sent to him. The Emperor Trajan, convinced by the straightforward statement of Pliny regarding the innocence of the Christians, sent to him this strange and most unfair reply as the guidance of his conduct in dealing with them:

"As to the Christians, you need not arrest them; but if they are denounced to you and proved guilty of professing Christianity, punish them: *conquirendi non sunt: si deferantur et arguantur, puniendi sunt.*" Tertullian, a writer of the third century, after showing with all the vehemence of his powerful logic the iniquity of such decision, concludes his address with the following unanswerable dilemma. "Either the Christians are guilty or they are innocent. If guilty, why do you not try and prosecute them as all other criminals in your courts of justice? If innocent, why do you punish them?" An irresistible argument, to which no answer could be given by those to whom it was addressed. We do not speak of the vague accusations brought forward by some pagan authors; no crime is stated with the exception of that of infanticide; but it is known that this accusation is based on an utterly erroneous and gross idea of the Holy Eucharist; but in no case, notwithstanding the challenge of the apologists, has it ever been possible for them to prove their charge by a single instance.

(*d*) *The persecuting emperors* themselves acknowledged the innocence of the Christians; for to justify the severity of their edicts they alleged no other motive than that of religion. Diocletian and Maximian in particular only accuse the Christians of having renounced the gods. Trajan, we know, in his answer to Pliny (Epis. 97), orders that the Christians be punished, but those only who are denounced as such; he forbids them being sought after to bring them to the tribunals; this is indeed to declare their innocence.

(*e*) There is, at all events, a very simple way of knowing the truth about the matter. Let us examine *the authentic Acts of the martyrs;* in the interrogatories as in the sentences passed, we find no trace of crime proved against the Christians; if they are accused, if they are judged worthy of death, it is because they will not adore the gods, it is because they are Christians. Do we desire a proof which will take the place of all others? In all the persecutions, in order to secure a discharge, to be even loaded with honors and rewards, it was sufficient that the accused should commit an act of idolatry. *Supplicando diis nostris,* invoking our gods, says Trajan, in

his letter referred to above. "The Christians are the only accused ones," says Origen, "whom the magistrates will leave in peace, if they consent to renounce their religion, offer sacrifices to idols and take the accustomed oaths." In the pamphlet cited above (n. 262), after having set forth and examined the different motives, which are put forth as the reasons of the persecutions, Father Houze concludes that all these reasons are insufficient to explain persecution, and that the true, decisive and fundamental reason is that given by Bossuet in his energetic language: "All the senses, all the passions, all interests were fighting for idolatry. It is the eternal struggle of evil against good, of sin against grace, of vice against virtue, of iniquity against justice; in a word, it is the perennial conflict of Satan against Christ and His followers. The perverse man desires to kill, to stamp out of existence everything that restrains his passions. Cain slays Abel, the Pharisees put Jesus Christ to death, the wicked at all times wish to destroy the Church, which is the body of Christ."

Answer to the Third Objection: That it was through fanaticism more than through conviction that the victims suffered (n. 262). We have already answered this objection in the preceding remarks. It is indeed sad to see modern unbelief more unjust to the heroes of Christianity than were the persecutors themselves. It does not scruple to impute madness to men, whose intrepid constancy was the admiration of the pagans themselves. The word *fanaticism* is much in favor with unbelievers when they speak of Catholics. But this *epithet* does not dispense them from giving sound reasons for their assertions. In reality, simple common sense loudly proclaims that fanaticism, that is to say, a blind fury without reason or motive, inspired by passion, confined to a limited time and space, can find no place in the present issue. In fact, what do we see here? A countless multitude of men and women, of every age and condition, soldiers and magistrates, philosophers converted to the Faith, who for nearly three centuries have suffered in countries most distant and different from each other, with calmness, amid the howling of the populace, atrocious and often prolonged tortures; and nowhere in

their conduct is there to be seen the least sign of pride, ambition, hatred or revenge! . . . Who would seriously believe that they would have sacrificed *everything,* life itself, without solid motives, without knowing precisely why they suffered? The impelling motive surely must not have been a *present and palpable object;* it could therefore have been nothing else than the reward to be attained *beyond the grave.* But the expectation of such a reward necessarily presupposes *supernatural Faith,* resting upon *the most convincing proofs.* (See Bergier, "Dictionnaire de théol., *s.v. Martyrs*" (Dictionary of Theology, article Martyrs); Frayssinous, "Questions sur les martyrs" (Questions concerning the martyrs); Fredet's "Modern History," most valuable note on page 704, on the number of martyrs during the general persecutions of the Church; Parsons, "Studies in Church History," I, 3, "The First Persecutions of the Church"; "Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la théologie Catholique" (Encyclopedic Dictionary of Catholic Theology, article Martyrs), XIV, by Wetzer and Welte, translated from the German by Goschler; Guggenberger, S.J., "A General History of the Christian Era," I, p. 28; Alzog, "Universal Church History," I, pt. 2, ch. 1, n. 70, "The Martyrs of the Church and Their Influence."

A Synthetic Summary. The Enemies to Be Overcome and the Victory Achieved

To bring into greater prominence the evidently insuperable obstacles the early Church met with and conquered, the following considerations are here appended as a striking proof of the more than human strength communicated to her by her Founder, a clear evidence of the unshaken stability and ever-enduring permanence, which was displayed before men from the very beginning of her existence.

The first enemies and persecutors were the Jews of Palestine, whose deep-seated belief in a counterfeit Messias yet to come, Christianity was undermining and exposing to the world. The false interpretations, which the Scribes and Pharisees had given of the prophecies concerning the prom-

ised Messias, had flattered the national pride, and formed the foundation of their highest worldly hopes. They had been told to expect in the forthcoming Messias an earthly hero, a deliverer, who was to free them from the detested bondage of pagan Rome, place the sceptre of empire in their hands and bring back with renewed splendor the glorious times of King Solomon's reign. They longed for a mighty avenger who with a strong arm would make ample retaliation for all the indignities they had been subjected to by the presumptuous heathens. If the Messias really came, how else could He enter into His high office than by breaking asunder the Roman yoke? He who did not present himself as a mighty conqueror at the head of a victorious army could not be the true Messias of the Promise, for in the prophets it was said that His Kingdom should extend from sea to sea. They were resolved to recognize no one as the true Messias, unless He equalled and surpassed themselves in the strict observance of the Law.

If He healed a sick man on the Sabbath day, allowed publicans to associate with Him, and did not shun all contact with unclean people, it was clear that He could not be the promised Messias. Such were some of the false, absurd views impressed upon the deluded people to prevent them from recognizing Christ as the divinely promised Savior and Redeemer. Taking advantage of the ignorance and simplicity of the common people the shrewd Scribes and Pharisees deliberately concealed from them the many prophecies, which foretold the true character of the Messias and the infallible signs by which He could easily be recognized by all, such as His humble birth in Bethlehem: that He would be poor and given up to labor from His youth: that He would be obedient, meek and peaceful, full of love and tenderness toward repenting sinners; and other similar predictions, all perfectly fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, as was proved above (nn. 231-241).

Now it was from those prejudices so firmly rooted in their hearts and minds that the Jewish people were to be turned away and won to the Faith of Christ, who was represented to them as a sacrilegious impostor, as an enemy of their race

and a friend of the hated Gentiles. They had, therefore, to be convinced that the pharisaical interpretations of the prophecies were utterly erroneous, that the expectation of a world-conquering Messias was a downright deception and a mere illusion. They had to be persuaded that the Mosaic religion, though divinely revealed, was but temporary in its obligation and intended by the Lord to be simply a type and figure which was now to give way to reality and be replaced by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet, notwithstanding the astounding miraculous proofs furnished by Christ of His divine mission, the whole Jewish nation, with few exceptions, rejected Christ as the heavenly sent Messias and remained obstinate in their unbelief. They exhibited their hatred of Christianity by becoming its first bitter persecutors. As we learn from the Acts, an inspired book written by St. Luke, a brief history of the infancy of Christianity—the preaching of the Gospel, the announcing of the doctrine of Jesus Christ and its profession were the only cause, motive or reason, on account of which the Apostles and the first Christian converts were savagely persecuted in Judea, particularly under the tyrannical King Herod Agrippa. St. Stephen was stoned to death, the twelve Apostles were seized, cast into prison and scourged. St. James, brother of the Apostle St. John, was beheaded; St. Peter was thrown into prison, destined to be publicly executed, had he not been miraculously delivered by an Angel; St. Paul's life was plotted against, and in Jerusalem every Christian who refused to renounce Christ was arrested, imprisoned and condemned to death. What emboldened the Jewish leaders and populace was the fact that Christians could expect no protection whatever from the Roman authorities, the then rulers of Judea. That first persecution, which was meant to strangle the Church in its infancy, lasted three long years (A.D. 37-40).

Another most difficult task, which confronted early Christianity, was the imperative necessity of unyielding resistance to Rome's imperial power, and the destruction of its pagan religion.

A fully organized system of idolatrous worship existed in

the Roman dominions, modelled after that of heathen Greece: magnificent temples were erected to the numerous deities: a multitude of priests, gorgeously arrayed, sacrificed animals festively decorated for the occasion: youths and maidens in flowing white garments and crowned with flowers assisted at these sacrificial functions. The emperor himself, the consuls, magistrates and senators, clothed in their magnificent robes of office, added splendor to such ceremonies by their presence. Their great national festivals were associated with the various gods under whose auspices and in whose honor they were held. The central error of Polytheism was due to the deification of nature and of all its elements: hence the multitude of divinities grew to such an extent as to surpass the number of their worshippers. The jealousy of the rival deities and the intricate confusion arising from it were publicly exposed and ridiculed by their own poetic bards. Three dignities were held by the ruling monarch: he was emperor, supreme pontiff, and as it were a visible god to be worshipped. The commanders of armies did not venture to march their legions to battle without having solemnly invoked the aid of the gods, in whose temples they deposited, on their return, the trophies of their victories. What, alas! confirmed soldiers and people in their idolatrous religion was their firm belief that the triumphs over the many conquered nations were all due to the protection and help of the deities they worshipped, a circumstance that caused one of the greatest obstacles to their conversion. But by far the worst feature of idolatry prevailing at the dawn of Christianity was its utterly degrading immorality. The worship of the divinity Aphrodite was characterized by shameless impurity and a studied excitement of gross lust surpassing all that the earliest times had witnessed. As impurity formed a part of religion, people gathered in the temples for the gratification of their lowest passions, whilst clouds of incense rose in their midst to honor and propitiate the goddess Venus, the patroness of unchaste worshippers. To destroy paganism and its time honored institutions described above was the gigantic task to be undertaken: it was a question of erecting Christianity on its ruins. But what

was the demand that Christianity was to exact from the haughty Greek and Roman heathens? To abandon forever their idolatrous creed and worship as utterly abominable and the work of demons: to accept a doctrine declaring that a crucified Jew was God: that His Gospel was divine: that they were to accept His severe code of morality, His ten commandments covering the whole field of their duties to God, to themselves and to their fellowmen. In short, they were to embrace a religion making war on all vices, sins and disorderly passions: a religion preaching all virtues and demanding every kind of sacrifice, death itself if occasion required it: in fine a religion holding out to its adherents not a temporal, but an invisible future eternal recompense, the result of unfaltering faith and persevering loyalty to the Church of Jesus Christ, its Founder.

The proud Roman defeated in the intellectual and moral conflict with Christianity resorted to violence to win its cause, acting on the tyrannical principle that might can make right, and strove to conquer its rival by killing it and sweeping out of existence an embarrassing competitor and stubborn foe. But the cruel attempt was doomed to failure: the blood of the slain martyrs was the seed of new Christians, and Christianity won a rapid, decisive and lasting victory.

It was a *rapid victory.* As history testifies, at the end of forty years the Christian religion was known in all the provinces of the vast Roman Empire: nay, it counted worshippers in all parts of the world.

It was a *decisive victory.* Christianity penetrated into the deepest depths of humanity. Under its beneficent influence the most firmly rooted vices gave place to the brightest virtues: the most degraded men and women were turned into Christians, and the Christians into saints. Pride was dethroned by the humility of the Cross, and inveterate hatred transformed into love. As the rising sun sheds its rays over the darkened earth, so did the light of Christian Faith illumine the world, invigorating, quickening and sanctifying the moral life of mankind.

Finally, it was a *lasting victory.* In the course of nineteen

centuries kingdoms, empires and republics have disappeared leaving behind them ruined monuments to tell posterity of their former greatness. Historic Christianity, which is identical with Catholicism, was not destined to suffer a similar fate, for the infallible promise of its Founder as to its existence even to the consummation of ages could not fail to be verified. It has overcome all its enemies, confounded all its calumniators, refuted all the heretics that attempted to pervert its Faith, it has humbled to the dust all its scoffers and weathered every storm. To victorious Christianity we can rightly apply the poet's words: Truth crushed to earth shall rise again. The eternal years of God are hers.

§ VIII. Eighth Proof

Wonderful Results Produced by Christianity, or the Prodigious Revolution Which It Brought about in the World

264. The proof which we shall draw from the benefits conferred upon the world by Christianity would require many pages to set them forth. We reserve the fuller development of this subject for a special chapter in Part X of this work, where we shall speak of the civilization brought about by the Church. There we shall show that the Catholic Church, that is to say, true Christianity, whenever carried into practice, has completely transformed the individual, the family, civil society, international relations, the Roman world and the world of the barbarians. For the present we shall confine ourselves to a few remarks, sufficient, however, to justify us in drawing a right conclusion.

265. State of the World before Jesus Christ. It is almost impossible for us, who live in the full brightness of Gospel light in the midst of cultured European and American society, cultivated and purified for centuries by the Church, to form an exact idea of the condition of the pagan world before the coming of Jesus Christ. There were then customs and habits so hideous that we find it difficult to realize the deplorable state of society in those days.

Everywhere, except among the Jewish people, there reigned uncertainty and *the grossest errors* concerning the truths most important for man to know and which form the basis of intellectual and moral life. One nation alone adored the true God; everywhere else men, with few exceptions, bowed in adoration before the stars, before plants, before foul animals, before wood and stone carved by the artist's chisel. The whole earth was but an immense temple of idols, and according to the energetic expression of Bossuet, everything was god except God Himself, the only true God and Sovereign Lord.

And let no one imagine that *the most polished* and most enlightened nations were less degraded than barbarous peoples. Persia adored the sun, Egypt the bull Apis, Ephesus the great Diana, Delphi had its Apollo, and Rome in its most brilliant epoch of literature and art erected to all the gods of the earth, to the most cruel as well as the most infamous, the renowned Pantheon, which still exists, where the cross, which now crowns its summit, attests to the whole world the victory of Christ over the idols of the pagan nations of the earth.

Public and private morals were worthy of such a religion. Forgetful of his origin and of his sublime destiny, man lowered himself to the level of the brute; or in the delirium of his pride, he exalted himself to the rank of the gods. Morality having no sanction, no foundation, life was without shame, like unto that of the gods themselves. Every passion had its altar. Human dignity, justice, the most sacred laws were everywhere forgotten and trampled under foot. In the upper classes oppression and tyranny reigned supreme; in the lower servility and degradation. (See Part X, ch. 1.) Let us here quote a page from Mgr. Gaume, "Histoire de la famille" (History of the Family), which paints in a vivid but true picture, pagan society as it actually existed everywhere.

"The bonds of religious society had been severed. Separated from God, *man* and *woman* had lost the sense of their native dignity, and they had fallen under the despotic empire of *sensuality*. Like their gods created by their passions they had become cruel and voluptuous. From their brow had fal-

len the crown of glory, with which the hand of God had adorned it; then with a bandage over their eyes, they had seated themselves in the slime; and then, forgetful of what they should have been, they had ceased to understand their true worth. Hence in pagan antiquity a profound and universal contempt of man for his fellow creatures and of man for himself.

"The *contempt for humanity* manifested itself everywhere; in the treatment of the child who was strangled, exposed, sold or immolated to pagan deities; in the prisoner who was reduced to slavery, forced to die in the amphitheatres to glut the cruelties of his conquerors; in the poor, who was hunted like a foul beast; in the slave who was scourged with stripes, overburdened with painful labors, thrown as food to lions and tigers, and put to death at the merest caprice of his owner; in woman who was bought and sold, married and repudiated and dishonored in a thousand ways.

"*The contempt of man for himself* was exhibited in his intelligence which was filled with errors, most shameful and gross and cruel, or with knowledge vain and sterile, utterly incapable of revealing to him true goodness and the source of real happiness; in his heart, which he polluted with the most brutal and humiliating affections; in his senses, which he shamelessly prostituted in making them subservient to every kind of iniquity; in his life, which he would end by the dagger, or by poison, or sell to whomsoever desired to abuse of it, and dispose of it, according to his caprice.

"As to society, it was no better; it was nothing else but the criminal abuse of the weak by the arbitrary domineering of the powerful. Individuals existed only for the State which was a god, whose commands had to be accepted as good and honest, even when they were the expression of the most flagrant injustice and the most odious tyranny."

Such was the state of debasement and degradation to which the world was reduced before the coming of Christ. And be it remembered, legislators, poets, orators, philosophers, never dreamt of bringing the world out of this abyss, into which it was sinking more and more every day. Often they

themselves were foremost in giving the example of all the vices that prevailed in the corrupt society, amidst which they lived. Whilst epicureanism was hastening the progress of moral corruption, stoicism, notwithstanding the comparative loftiness of its principles, opposed no restraint whatever against the universal evil. By inculcating *abstention* on the part of the wise man, viz., a complete seclusion from and total indifference to all earthly and social interests and by reducing life to a sad and silent contemplation of things, it withdrew man from the duties of social life and shut him up in an egotism full of pride and self-conceit. If it produced a few solitary and sterile virtues, it was powerless to promote the happiness of mankind, and despotism was, on the whole, quite satisfied *with this philosophy of despair to which was abandoned the world and its government.*

It is true, a few philosophers had conceived some right and elevated ideas concerning God, the soul and virtue; but with these doctrines were mingled the grossest errors as to the essence of the Divine Nature and the destiny of the human soul. And then, as to the most fundamental truths, there still lurked even in the best intelligences, a cold and enervating doubt. After having at great length discussed the proofs of the immortality of the soul, Cicero lets fall from his pen this melancholy avowal: "How does this happen? I know not; when I read these arguments, I allow myself to be convinced; but as soon as I lay down the book, and begin to reflect, all my conviction is dispelled: *Dum lego assentior: quum posui librum et mecum ipse de immortalitate animarum cœpi cogitare, assensio omnis illa elabitur.*" (Tuscul., I, xi.) What kind of proselytism could be expected from men of this kind?

266. The World after the Coming of Christ. Who can be ignorant of the marvelous change which has come over the world *after* the Cross had been raised up on Mount Calvary? We will have occasion to speak of it in Chapter II of Part X. We shall content ourselves here with giving a summary of the principal benefits, which we owe to Him who so rightly calls Himself "the way, the truth, and the life."

1. Not only the Greeks and the Romans, but *even the most*

barbarous peoples of the earth received the light of the Gospel; even the *rudest men,* the men whom ancient philosophy had judged unworthy of instruction, were enlightened by the torch of truth, and the people acquired, as to a great number of essential truths, a *certainty,* which the most celebrated philosophers never possessed. The preaching of the Gospel to the poor is one of the characteristics which distinguish the mission of the Savior: *pauperes evangelizantur.* (Matt. 11, 5.) It is in this way that the truths, which are the firm foundation of morality, have become, as it were, an integral part of society, so much so that we find it difficult to believe that it could ever have been otherwise.

2. In substituting the worship of the true God and adoration in spirit and truth for the intellectual darkness and the ancient errors which enshrouded the old world, Christianity has everywhere brought forth those *virtues* which sanctify and honor mankind. Men saw these virtues develop under all climates and even in the most depraved cities; there was no age, nor condition or class of society that, under the all-powerful influence of grace, did not give birth to prodigies of moral grandeur and superhuman holiness never seen before.

3. Christianity did not limit itself to the sanctification of its individual members; it has purified, moralized *public conscience* itself. The heart of the pagan world was given up to the worship of material brute force and wrapped up in unpitying egotism; Christianity has found the wonderful secret of opening up human hearts, not only to the respect of right and justice, but also to the fruitful inspirations and the sweet effusions of mercy and charity. Whilst pagan antiquity had for poverty and suffering nothing but contempt, the new religion, on the contrary, has never ceased to inspire respect and sympathy for all the miseries and woes of humanity; it has given birth to charitable institutions and sublime devotedness intended to alleviate them.

4. By a necessary consequence, the religion of Christ has replaced pagan legislation and caused the despotism and nameless turpitudes engendered by it to be succeeded by a

new legislation all imbued with its spirit. By its doctrine as to the origin and destiny of man, it has given back to him his personal nobility. Without creating anarchy, it has delivered him from the despotic and brutalizing yoke of his fellows, to subject him to the Supreme Master and Lawgiver, from whom alone emanates all authority on earth, basing its teaching on St. Paul's doctrine so clearly expressed in the following words (Rom. 13, 1–2): *"Let every soul be subject to higher powers; for there is no power but from God; and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation."* Thus have been healed the hideous and, humanly speaking, incurable wounds of pagan antiquity: slavery, the despotism of the father and of the husband, the tyranny of the State, which absorbed all individuality, and the barbarism of international relations.

267. Remarks. To these incontestable facts we shall add a few remarks, which will help to bring out their bearing on the present question more clearly still.

1. This wonderful transformation, impossible according to all natural laws, was accomplished in *all places where Christianity has been able to establish itself.* All nations, whether barbarous or enlightened, old or new, have felt the effects of the Gospel teaching and of the heavenly graces which accompany it.

2. *In every land where Christianity has not penetrated* the same ancient condition of superstition, gross idolatry, moral perversion still subsists without any modification; outside of the nations which recognize or worship Christ as their Savior, no people is to be found distinguished by its civilization, laws, institutions, morality, by liberty wisely regulated, by the cultivation of the arts, science and letters, in fine by intellectual and moral worth.

3. *Some regions regenerated* by Christianity, in Africa and Asia, have *fallen back* into their primitive degradation as soon as they closed their eyes to the light of the Gospel, and for centuries have remained unmoved and immovable in the

midst of the darkness, into which they have voluntarily plunged themselves. How great indeed must have been in times past the splendor of the churches in which was heard the voice of Athanasius, Cyril, Chrysostom, Cyprian, Augustine and others! And even in the midst of still Catholic nations, do we not see men return to the old errors, when they reject the teachings of Christianity?

Conclusion. These are the certain facts which amply justify us in drawing this necessary and perfectly logical conclusion. A religion which performs wonders so far beyond human power cannot come from man; divine fruits reveal a celestial principle, a divine sap in their growth. (Matt. 7, 16-18.)

§ IX. Ninth Proof

The Doctrinal Teaching of Jesus Christ

268. We shall set forth at the outset the process of reasoning on which is based the ninth proof: Whether we consider *dogma, morals* or *worship,* the doctrine of Jesus Christ manifestly possesses *superhuman* perfection; and this character appears still more clearly if we consider the circumstances, under which it was announced to the world. This doctrine *therefore comes from God,* and consequently Jesus is the messenger or ambassador of God.

Let us briefly sketch the principal points of the doctrine of Jesus Christ as found in the Gospel and the other books of the New Testament, or as transmitted from the Apostles to our own day by authentic tradition both oral and written.

I.—The Dogmatic Teaching of Christ

269. **A.** Doctrine of Christ Concerning God. God is the Being who is, by Himself, without beginning and without end, existing from all eternity by the necessity of His nature, and possessing all perfections in an infinite degree. By His omnipotence, to which everything is possible, He drew forth from nothing everything that exists, and He is thus the

beginning, the center and the end of all things; by His immensity He is wholly present in all places and nothing can contain Him. As St. Paul said to the Athenians: *"In Him we live, and we move, and we are."* (Acts 17, 28.) We are in Him and He in us; in Him and by Him, we have life, movement and being, from His omniscience nothing can escape, neither the past, the present nor the future, neither the beings purely possible, nor the future deliberations of beings endowed with liberty; everything is open to the divine thought, in an eternal and unchangeable present; by His providence as wise as it is full of love, He watches over all beings, making them serve His glory and leading them to the end, He assigned to them, unless they voluntarily raise obstacles thereto; nothing in this world happens without His order or without His permission; a hair cannot fall from our head without the assent of our Father who is in heaven. *"A hair of your head,"* said Jesus, *"shall not perish."* (Luke 21, 18.) His sanctity has a sovereign horror of even the slightest iniquity; His justice punishes and rewards everyone according to his deserts; it does not leave without reward even a glass of water given in His name. (Matt. 10, 42.)

That which the teaching of Jesus here offers most particularly and most remarkable and striking is the persistence with which He inculcates the *goodness and mercy* of God. These divine attributes, of which the pagans had no conception, were not, it is true, unknown to the Jews. In their eyes, however, God was above all the Sovereign Master, the all-powerful Lord, who was to be adored and feared. But to the disciples of Jesus Christ, He is before all else *Bounty by essence: Deus charitas est,* God is love. (I John 4, 16.) As He is fully sufficient unto Himself, it is a pure effect of His bounty if He has created the world, it is His desire to communicate to others something of His perfections and happiness. As the Schoolmen say, *"Bonum est diffusivum sui"* (good tends to diffuse itself) ; a character found in an eminent degree in Him who is goodness itself. This thought is conveyed to us by the following words of St. Paul: *"God who is rich in mercy through His exceeding charity, with which He loved us."*

(Ephes. 2, 4.) But His boundless mercy shines forth especially in the Incarnation of His Son and in the redemption of the world by the shedding of His blood. God is therefore really the tender and compassionate Father who asks for our love; who knows the weakness of His children and has pity upon their misery. By His grace, which He promised never to deny to prayer, and by the Sacraments, which He has instituted in His Church and which are admirably adapted to all our wants, He helps us not to fall, and if we fall, to rise again and to strengthen ourselves in the way to heaven. God is the Good Shepherd who goes afar to seek the lost and wandering sheep; and when He has at last found it, He takes it upon His shoulders to spare it the fatigue of the journey. Again, He is the Father of the Prodigal Son, who, after waiting for years for His ungrateful and unfortunate son, receives him on his return with unheard of tenderness. It is because, as Jesus says, "*there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance.*" (Luke 15, 7.)

To the dogma of the unity of God so clearly taught in the Old Testament and testified to by reason itself, Jesus adds other dogmas, of which the Jews had only a confused or incomplete knowledge. It is He who revealed in an explicit manner, the ineffable dogmas of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation of the Word, the Redemption of the world.

Adam had sinned, and divine justice required satisfaction worthy of the divine Majesty who had been offended. That satisfaction was given, but "*where sin abounded, grace hath abounded more.*" (Rom. 5, 20.) Not only God has not abandoned mankind involved in the transgression of the first man, but He has drawn good from evil itself. By a miracle of love, greater than the miracle of the creation and that of the raising up of mankind to the supernatural order, He formed with men the most ineffable, the most intimate union possible. The second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Son equal in all things to the Father and Holy Ghost, assumes to Himself hypostatically, that is in the *unity of person,* a human nature akin to ours, save sin. By His human nature Jesus could suffer

and die; by His divine nature He communicated to His expiatory sufferings an infinite value: thus was offered to God's offended Majesty a reparation fully equal to His supreme greatness; thus justice and mercy were enabled to give to one another the kiss of peace. "*Mercy and truth have met each other; justice and peace have kissed.*" (Ps. 84, 11.)

270. **B.** Doctrine of Jesus Christ Concerning Man (n. 52). This doctrine is not less admirable nor less affecting than that which concerns God. Created to the image of the Most High he was at once adorned with sanctifying grace, which communicated to him supernatural life and a kind of participation in the life of God Himself. We cannot wish for a better proof of this statement of Jesus Christ than the word of the inspired writer, St. Peter, who in his second Epistle (1, 4), speaks thus: "*By whom* (viz., Christ) *He* (the eternal Father) *hath given us very great and precious promises, that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature.*" Man had as his sublime mission and destiny in this world to honor, to love and to serve his Creator and Father, and by so doing to attain everlasting happiness in heaven. Hence by fulfilling this duty so necessary, so glorious and so much in conformity with reason, man was assured of reaching his supreme end, that is, to enjoy in heaven the full possession of God, to partake of His infinite happiness during centuries without end (nn. 62-63.)

The inheritance of heaven being assured to man as the glorious reward of his obedience, it was just that his fidelity should be put to the test. God, therefore, imposed upon Adam a prohibition with a formal order to respect that prohibition. Compliance with this order, which was easy to obey, was to be equivalent to the acknowledgment of the sovereign domain of God, an authentic evidence of the voluntary submission of the creature to the Creator, of the child to his father and benefactor. How eminently reasonable and easy was God's precept to our first parents clearly appears from the following reflections of the late Cardinal Manning in his "Sin and its Consequences" (pp. 22–23). We hear men of this day say: "What can be more absurd than to

believe that the human race fell because Adam ate an apple?'' I put the words with all the bald impertinence of the world. Let us see now whether the ways of God need justification. God created Adam, and placed him in Paradise in the midst of a garden. He gave him a dominion over every tree of that garden, except one only. Such was the generosity of God. He did not say: ''Thou mayest eat of the fruit of that one tree, but of the ten thousand other fruit-bearing trees of the garden thou shalt not eat; and in whatsoever day thou eatest of them thou shalt die the death.'' God did not, with the parsimony of a human heart, give Adam permission to eat of one tree, and forbid him ten thousand. No. He gave him free permission to eat of ten thousand, and forbade him to eat of one alone. Was there anything unreasonable in this? Now what did Almighty God in that commandment do? He reserved His right as Sovereign—He reserved His right over the obedience of the man whom He had created. He thereby revealed that He had jurisdiction over that garden, and over the man to whom He had permitted its free enjoyment. He put him upon trial—it was the test of his fidelity. More than this: it was a test so slight, that I may say there was no temptation to break the law. If he had been forbidden to eat of all the trees of the garden, save one, he would have been tempted at every turn. Every tree he gazed upon would have been a fresh temptation; he would have been followed and haunted by temptation wherever he went. God did not deal so with him—He forbade him *one,* and *one alone;* so that he had perfect liberty to go to and fro, gathering from the whole garden, except from that one tree. Where, then, was the temptation? As on God's part there was Divine generosity, so on man's part there was the wantonness of transgression. I can see nothing in this that is not consonant with Divine wisdom, Divine goodness, Divine sovereignty, and Divine mercy. I see nothing to warrant the impertinence of the world.

Our first parents disobeyed. As a punishment for this criminal abuse of their liberty, they were deprived of grace, which was the supernatural life of their soul. Adam was

thereby rendered incapable of transmitting it to his posterity, which, by the free disposal of God, had been constituted dependent upon the head of humanity, for *supernatural* as well as for *natural* life. In like manner a father ruined by gambling or fallen from his station by an act of forfeiture, cannot transmit to his children honors or a fortune which he himself no longer possesses. And, as according to the sovereign but benevolent will of God, every man was to be born with the dignity of *child* by adoption, the loss of these special relations of friendship, resulting from a *guilty act*, constituted a true *forfeiture*, and rendered non-regenerate man an *object of aversion* in God's eyes. According to the teaching of Catholic theology that which is transmitted to us by generation is not the personal or actual sin of Adam, that is, the *act* by which he transgressed the law of God; but it is the state or *condition* resulting from the severing of the relations of supernatural friendship, to which God had gratuitously raised Adam and with him all his posterity.—And as the privation of sanctifying grace is for us a consequence of the infidelity of the head of the human race, and not the effect of a *personal* sin, hence it follows that those who die with only original sin upon them do not suffer the pain of sense; they find themselves deprived only of the beatific vision, an extraordinary and supernatural favor due to no man, but which God has made to be the portion and inheritance of sanctifying grace. This is the doctrine of St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, Innocent III, and many others. (See "The Future Life," pp. 289–301.)

This transgression of the first man has been the source *of all the ills* that afflict humanity and affords the only true and rational explanation of the mystery of sorrow and death, which has been and always will be the despair of that philosophy which is rebellious to divine Faith. The loss of *sanctifying grace* brought about the forfeiture of all the other *supernatural* gifts, as also the privation of the *preternatural* or extranatural prerogatives, which God had generously attached to this grace. These magnificent privileges, which do not necessarily belong to our nature, but which constitute its integrity or completeness, were especially the immortality

of the human body, its exemption from illness, and the subjection of the senses to the soul, and of carnal appetites to the control of reason. Original sin caused the loss of all these advantages. Man has been subjected to death, to infirmity and sickness, to ills of every kind. The harmony, which at the beginning existed between the superior and inferior faculties, has given place to the constant struggle, which we all feel within ourselves. (Gal. 5, 17.)

It is an intestine war, an interior rebellion in man; it is the revolt of the flesh against the spirit, of the slave against the master. Before sin man possessed a tranquil empire over his heart. Not that he was without passions, but his passions were not rebellious; they were simply natural tendencies submissive to reason, as reason itself was, in its turn, submissive to God. So long as this beautiful order existed, all was harmony and peace; no sooner was this order disturbed by Adam's disobedience to his Maker, then confusion, war and disorder began to prevail. The passions revolted against reason; pride, avarice, sensuality, all inordinate instincts rose to invade the human heart and reduce it to slavery and sin; for as the Savior teaches us: "*Whosoever committed sin, is the servant of sin.*" (John 8, 34.) This rebellion of the passions is the wretched inheritance of all the descendants of Adam stained with original sin.

It is thus that virtue, whose practice was at first sweet and easy, has become the object of a noble but hard struggle.

Hence we perceive that the evils, which weigh upon us, are not the work of God, but rather the work of man, who, by abusing his liberty, has been unable to preserve the many gifts and prerogatives with which he had been generously endowed.

However, human nature has not suffered in anything that was *essential* to it. This the Church has always taught, especially against Protestants and Jansenists.

Luther (d. 1546) denied the existence of man's liberty and completely perverted the true notion of both actual and sanctifying grace. Jansenius, the heretical Bishop of Ypres in Flanders (d. 1638), fell into the same error. He held that

man is not free, and that it is impossible to keep some of God's commandments. They were both condemned by the Catholic Church, whose doctrine on grace and free will is thus tersely expressed by her holy doctor, St. Augustine (d. 490): "If there is no grace, how can Christ save the world? And if there is no free will, how can Christ judge the world?" "Si non est Dei gratia," inquit S. Augustinus, "quomodo Christus salvat mundum? Et si non est liberum arbitrium, quomodo judicat mundum?"

The shedding of the Blood of the Redeemer has restored to us the right to sanctifying grace and the inheritance of heaven. This grace, the principle of supernatural life, is offered to man, but man possesses the dangerous power of rejecting this signal benefit, for he retains free will, the indispensable condition of all virtue and merit. As the Lord Himself tells us in Holy Writ: "*God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel. He added His commandments and precepts. If thou wilt keep the commandments, and perform acceptable fidelity for ever, they shall preserve thee. He hath set water and fire before thee; stretch forth thy hand to which thou wilt. Before man is life and death, good and evil; that which he shall choose shall be given him.*" (Ecclus. 15, 14–18.)

If he renders himself guilty of this ingratitude, as mad as it is criminal, if he obstinately rejects the advances of divine mercy, which unceasingly calls him to repentance and offers him pardon, man can impute to himself alone his eternal loss. "*Destruction is thy own, O, Israel; thy help is only in me.*" (Osee 13, 9.) If he accepts with gratitude, as he should, this gift bought at an infinite price, it is through the grace of God that he will merit the promised reward; participation in the happiness of divinity itself. This reward will be in proportion to his merits.

The divine promise of everlasting happiness to the just is testified to us by God's own word, both in the Old and in the New Testament. In Genesis 15, 1, we read: "*The word of the Lord came to Abram by a vision, saying: Fear not, Abram, I am thy protector and thy reward exceeding great.*"

St. John, the beloved disciple, writes as follows: *"Dearly beloved, we are now the sons of God; and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like to Him, because we shall see Him, as He is."* (I, 3, 2.)

We deem it advisable to develop still more Christ's doctrine relating to the supernatural destiny of man in the present order of divine Providence (n. 52).

The root of evil in human life chiefly consists in attributing a false value to the things of this world and in a complete neglect of the sublime prospects, which, according to the most benevolent designs of the Creator, are held out to His rational creatures in the world to come. This error, which may become fatal to any of them, is fully repaired by the teachings of Divine Faith in a real hereafter, which enable us to look upon this life in its true light as a passage to the next, where all accounts will be evenly balanced and justice done to all human beings according to their works (Ps. 61, 13; Gal. 6, 8). This revealed doctrine, embodied in holy Scripture and Tradition, has been preserved in its full integrity by the Church Christ founded on Peter, His first vicar (see Part VI); a truth demonstrated in numberless apologetic works written in every language spoken by man and placed within the reach of all. Man's supernatural destiny, as explained in Parts I and V, consists in a faithful, loyal persevering fulfillment of the Creator's will as manifested in His positive law, the Ten Commandments, reduced by Christ Himself to the great law of love. Jesus said: *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets."* (Matt. 22, 37–40.) As we shall soon explain, the observance of this law infallibly leads man, elevated to the supernatural state, to the attainment of his supernatural destiny, to the beatific vision, the possession and enjoyment of a happiness perfect in its object, boundless in its extent and eternal in its duration.

A pertinent question is here asked: Can we believe that Almighty God is indifferent as to whatever attitude men may choose toward their present supernatural destiny and the observance or violation of the laws He published to lead them to its attainment? Or has the Creator, and Supreme Ruler of mankind made any provision to induce them to the fulfillment of His commandments, and to deter them from their transgression, whilst leaving untrammeled the exercise of their liberty? We answer, as a protection and bulwark of His laws, the Supreme, omnipotent lawgiver has established a sanction, that is, the divine decree alloting eternal happiness to the just, the observers of His laws, and everlasting punishment to the wicked, the transgressors of His commands. Hence the double sanction accompanying divine legislation, the remunerative, and the punitive sanction. It stands to reason that the Lord, as supreme Legislator, cannot permit what would be utterly unbecoming His Sovereign Majesty, that even one single rational creature should withdraw himself from His dominion, despise his supernatural destiny and transgress God's holy laws with impunity.

The Remunerative Sanction

Many are the testimonies that could be adduced from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and the writings of the Apostles in the New. Full conviction, however, is carried to the minds and hearts of all Christian believers, and, in fact, to all unprejudiced men, by the teachings of Christ Himself. Though mankind were never left in ignorance of their high destiny, yet it must be admitted that its divine revelation reached the meridian splendor, when the Son of the eternal living God, Incarnate Wisdom, appeared upon earth and exercised His office as supreme Teacher of men. This is precisely the truth taught by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews. "*God, who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days, hath spoken to us by His Son, whom He hath appointed Heir of all things, by whom also He made*

the world.'' (Heb. 1, 1–2.) Christ spoke as follows: *''Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid. In my Father's house there are many mansions. I will take you to myself that where I am, you also may be.''* (John 14, 1–3.) *''Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in Heaven.''* (Matt. 5, 12.) *''The just shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.''* (Matt. 13, 43.) *''Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of the Lord.''* (Matt. 25, 21.) *''The water that I will give him* (the just man) *shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting.''* (John 4, 14.)

The Master's voice was echoed by His disciples, as we learn from His holy Apostles Peter and Paul (I Pet. 1, 4; II Cor. 4, 18). The Redemption of Christ was perfect and complete, and such is its astounding effect, realized in all the just, namely the perfect happiness of their soul after their departure from this life, and the complete happiness of their body through their final glorious resurrection. According to the Lord's most munificent designs, earth is the temporary exile of humanity. Heaven is their permanent country, a thought elegantly developed by St. Augustine, a man distinguished both by the loftiness of his genius and the holiness of his life. ''We seek the Lord God in the present life where we labor; we shall find Him in the future, where we rest. Here below we see God, as it were, in a shadow, in a dark manner; in Heaven we shall behold Him in His full splendor, face to face. On earth our love of God is merely incipient: in Paradise our love of Him will be perfect. There our repose will be without end, our knowledge without error, and our joy without tears. Heaven means all this to us as yet pilgrims in exile; it means a good deal more to those that have reached their blessed country.'' (De Civitate Dei.)

The Punitive Sanction

We did not stop to discuss at any length the arguments that may be alleged to prove the existence of Heaven to

unbelievers. It is not Heaven that needs to be proved, but the truth of the existence of hell, particularly its endless duration. Eternity, the consolation of the just, is the terror of the wicked, who fiercely assail and deny it, not because it is not solidly proved, but because they dread the awful consequences, which their reckless, immoral conduct entails in the world to come. It must be granted that the strongest proof of the stern reality of punitive sanction is that derived from the authority of God Himself, who established it, and revealed it in both the Old and the New Testaments. The Lord not satisfied to have this terrific truth announced by the inspired Saints of the Old Law (Judith 16, 20–21; Job 10, 22; Is. 33, 14; Dan. 12, 2) decreed that the everlasting penal sanction should be moreover proclaimed and promulgated by no less an authority than that of His own divine Son.

No son of thunder among His Apostles has so emphasized the terrible punishment awaiting impenitent sinners in the world to come. Hence the doctrine of the New Testament regarding that awful truth can be fully determined from the words of Christ Himself, even if no other Scriptural testimony existed. According then to His explicit announcements, future punishment, as decreed by divine justice, sweeps from the field of controversy all false theories and illusions such as general salvation of saints and sinners held by Universalists, extinction of being taught by annihilationists, other future trials after death, and temporary duration of punishment for all condemned sinners, advocated by the opponents of endless sufferings in Hell.

A few quotations from the sacred lips of Incarnate Wisdom will suffice: "*And the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment.*" (Matt. 25, 46.) "*And if thy hand scandalize thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into hell, into unquenchable fire: where their worm dieth not and the fire is not extinguished. And if thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee with one eye to enter into the kingdom of God, than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire; where their worm dieth not and the fire is not extinguished.*"

(Mark 9, 42–43, 45, 47.) *"And I say to you, my friends: Be not afraid of them who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you shall fear: fear ye Him, who after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say to you, fear Him."* (Luke 12, 4–5.)

What is the punitive sanction, for which the Catholic Church holds herself responsible as being divinely authorized? It is as follows:

(1) Hell exists, created by God's justice to punish the rebel angels, the demons, and impenitent sinful human creatures.

(2) Hell is a place of torments comprising the pain of sense chiefly from fire, and that of the loss of God incurred immediately after death in mortal, unrepented sin.

(3) The penalty of Hell is eternal. There is the dogma; whatever else might be said is not of faith, because not explicitly defined. Is not this terrible? And what more do we require to impress us with salutary fear of God's judgments? Rightfully therefore did Diderot write (d. 1784): "A sensible man will act in life as though there was a hell, so long as even one only fragment of doubt remains in his mind." And what, I say, should man's conduct be, when he reflects that the voice of divine revelation, the whole of Christendom, the promptings of reason, and the universal consent of mankind unanimously proclaim the existence and endless duration of that punishment, thus removing all doubt as to the reality of punitive sanction, which the omnipotent judge has placed upon His laws. The following reflection shows that the endless duration of punishment is fully justified. From the dictate of reason and the authority of divine revelation the sinner knows that his soul is immortal. Now, if notwithstanding this knowledge, he prefers to die in the state of unrepented grievous

> sin, he, of his own accord, places himself in a perpetual, irreconcilable enmity with his Creator and judge, since no grace of repentance is granted beyond the tomb. Is there anything unjust if the punishment lasts as long as the guilt, that is forever? Should not an eternal enemy of God be eternally punished?

Of such a sinner, rejecting the grace of conversion even to the bitter end, Christ says in His Gospel that "*He shall be guilty of an everlasting sin—æterni delicti.*" (Mark 3, 29.) No wonder then if eternal rebellion is to meet eternal chastisement.

We must moreover bear in mind the most wise and absolutely necessary purpose of the divine legislation and its sanction intended to furnish to men motives, which, without tampering with the liberty of their will, are powerful enough to deter and refrain them from the commission of sin. Again, the light of reason proves that, among the attributes proper to the Deity, are reckoned infinite wisdom, justice and goodness. (See Part I, ch. ii.) Now divine revelation, which reason shows to be an authentic and reliable record of God's dealings with His rational creatures, tells us in the clearest language that God infinitely wise, just and good has established a double sanction to facilitate and enforce the execution of His laws. Therefore such a sanction really exists, viz., eternal happiness to the just, everlasting punishment to the wicked. As St. John Chrysostom writes, "if belief in eternal punishment does not deter reckless sinners from the broadway of iniquity, shall belief in a temporary hell do it? Indeed this world of ours would cease to be habitable, if the wicked had nothing to fear in the next."

In conclusion many testimonies of Holy Scriptures and the verdict of reason itself declare that Hell and its torments are the exclusive result of man's own making. St. Bernard uttered a great truth when he said: "Only human will burns in Hell." St. Augustine, in his usual ingenious language, sums up this doctrine in the two following brief sentences. "Were it not

for the grace of Christ, how could the world be saved? And were it not for the liberty of man how could the world be judged?"

What sound reason teaches on the freedom of man and his personal responsibility for all free, deliberate acts, is fully confirmed by God's own revelation. The following testimony will suffice. *"God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel. He added His commandments and precepts. If Thou wilt keep the commandments, and perform acceptable fidelity for ever, they shall preserve thee. Before man is life and death, good and evil; that which he shall choose, shall be given him."* (Ecclus. 15, 14–18.)

For a full treatment of the weighty question of Punitive Sanction see "The Future Life," a recent work by the editor of this Apologetic Course, pp. 301–553. (Benziger Bros., New York.)

271. **C.** Doctrine of Jesus Christ Concerning the World. In bringing forth from nothing the Universe which surrounds us, God, being infinitely wise, must necessarily have proposed to Himself an end worthy of Himself, viz., His *exterior* glory. Glory, however, is nothing but clear knowledge attended with praise. *Clara cum laude notitia.* As the *material* world is incapable by itself of giving this glory to God, it is for man, for the intelligent creature, the king of creation, to give it to Him in contemplating and praising His power, His wisdom, His bounty, in a word, all His divine perfections, which shine forth in the whole of creation. But God did not stop here. This praise would have been limited, as man Himself, if the Son of God had not carried His love so far as to clothe Himself with our human nature and to live with us (John 1). By the intervention or mediation of Him who is at once God and man, the glory rendered to the Divinity is really infinite. One act of adoration of the Word made flesh glorifies God, the Creator, incomparably more than could be done by millions of worlds inhabited by the most sublime creatures.

Everything that created nature contains, the triple king-

dom, mineral, vegetable and animal, all is destined, in the providential plan, to assist man in fulfilling his glorious mission in this world and to realize for him his blessed destiny in the next. It is the same as to the events of each day, happy or sorrowful, public or private, directly willed by God or simply permitted by Him. Thanks to the Redemption, all the ills of life have ceased to be sterile and hopeless; they still continue to be a chastisement, it is true, but it depends upon man himself to transform them into means of expiation, a source of merit, into so many title deeds enabling him to conquer a more brilliant crown, a higher place in heaven: "*Diligentibus Deum omnia cooperantur in bonum*" (To them that love God all things work together unto good) (Rom. 8, 28). "*I reckon*," says the same Apostle, "*that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us.*" (Rom. 8, 18).

III.—The Moral Teaching of Jesus Christ

272. It is impossible to conceive anything more perfect than the moral law inculcated by Christ. Unbelievers themselves are compelled to admit it. Strauss unhesitatingly asserts that "the morality of Jesus Christ is the foundation of human civilization," and that "the historical Jesus is the type of moral perfection." Renan declares "the moral teaching of Jesus is the most beautiful doctrine that mankind ever received. . . . Each one of us," he adds, "owes to Him what is best in himself. . . . The sermon on the Mount will never be surpassed." Whilst that law traces with marvelous clearness *all the duties of every man* towards God, towards himself and towards other men, it forbids not only all crime and every fault, but even the desire and the wilful thought of evil. Not content with confirming the practice of all that is commanded by the natural law, it urges man to the practice of the highest and most perfect virtues, the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and voluntary obedience: sublime virtues unknown to the world, the very name of which was

to strike the world with deepest admiration and respect. In this connection it is important for us to know what Christ meant when addressing the Jewish people He said: "*Do not think that I am come to destroy the Law. I am not come to destroy but to fulfill.*" (Matt. 5, 17.) He intended, in the first place, to correct the erroneous view of some of their teachers who held that the promised Messias was to abolish all laws. This error was revived by the heretics of the sixteenth century and condemned by the Council of Trent. "If any one should say that nothing is prescribed in the Gospel except Faith, and that the Ten Commandments are not binding on Christians, let him be anathema." (Session VI, can. 17.) Secondly, to understand what was the law, which He was to fulfill and enjoin on His followers, we must briefly recall these notions. The positive divine law is distinguished into the Old and New Laws. The Old Law, that of the Old Testament, contained three kinds of precepts. The *moral* precepts prescribing what is imposed by the natural law, a participation of the eternal law. Such is the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments. The *ceremonial* precepts, namely, the ritual, ceremonies and sacrifices pertaining to divine worship. The *judicial* precepts, which referred to the politic and economic administration for the right government of the people. The *ceremonial* and *judicial* precepts were abolished by Christ. But that part of the Old Law, which referred to moral precepts, summed up in the Ten Commandments, was preserved and confirmed in the New Law: and it is precisely of this Law that our Savior spoke when He said: "I am not come to destroy the Law." The new positive divine law, the law of grace and Christian liberty, the law of the New Testament, contains likewise three kinds of precepts. The *moral* precepts, as stated above, and particularly the three theological virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity. The *ceremonial* precepts, the sacraments and the august Sacrifice of the New Law. The *evangelical* counsels, Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, whose obligations are binding only on those who have freely embraced and chosen them.

The ideal of perfection set up by Jesus Christ, the end put

forth by Him to be attained by the efforts of the human will, is nothing else than the perfection of *God* Himself: *"Be ye therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect."* (Matt. 5, 48.)

The Son of God has made this perfection *more easy to imitate* by showing Himself to us under a human form; to be perfect we have only to reproduce in ourselves the virtues, of which Jesus has given us at the same time the precept and the example: *"For I have given to you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also."* (John 13, 15.) According to the forcible expression of Tertullian, every Christian should be another Christ: *Christianus alter Christus;* he should be able to say with St. Paul: *"It is not I who live; it is Christ that liveth in me."* (Gal. 2, 20.)

It is principally as a Father full of love, goodness and mercy, that God reveals Himself to us in the Gospel law; is it therefore strange to know that He requires that Christians should excel in these same virtues?

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and first commandment; and the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets." (Matt. 22, 37, 40.) Unceasingly does Christ insist on the necessity of this charity towards our neighbor, viz., toward all men without any exception whatever. This is, He says, His favorite commandment; the sign by which His disciples will be known; an infallible means of pleasing Him and of gaining innumerable merits. *"Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to Me."* (Matt. 25, 40.) Before God, says St. Paul (Gal. 3, 28,) *"there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free . . . for you are all one in Christ Jesus."* And referring to the lofty doctrines, which revealed Faith propounded by Christ holds out to regenerated mankind, the same Apostle writes: *"The Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God. And if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ; yet*

so if we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him." (Rom. 8, 16, 17.)

273. The Divine Savior knew full well that His most pure morality is hard and painful for fallen human nature. Therefore, as we read in St. Luke: "*He said to all: if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*" (9, 23.)

But at the same time *to stimulate our courage,* He assures us that His *yoke is sweet* and His *burden light* for those who generously take it up; that the observance of the commandments brings peace to the soul, a treasure of great price. "*And you shall find rest to your souls.*" (Matt. 11, 29.) And He never ceases to recall to our minds the *eternal and infinite rewards* which God has prepared for those who love Him (n. 270). And as it is also necessary that we be restrained by the thought of punishment, when on the brink of the abyss, into which our passions threaten to plunge us, Jesus, who wishes above all to save us, speaks on fourteen different occasions in terrific language of *eternal hell* (Mark 9, 42–47; Luke 12, 4–5), and He concludes His threats with a solemn warning that leaves no room for doubt or excuse: "*What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*" (Matt. 16, 26.) And finally to these motives in themselves so efficacious in inducing us to persevere in the ways of truth and happiness, Jesus adds another greater still and more meritorious and worthy of great souls, the love of God for Himself for His own sake, a love which begets and ennobles all the virtues.

Moreover in our painful struggle against the world, the devil and our unruly passions, we are not left alone to fight singlehanded, nor are we abandoned to our own strength. It is the characteristic of Jesus Christ to give at the same time with the admirable precepts of morality, the strength needed to carry them into practice. He has prepared for us *supernatural graces, most efficacious and most abundant* to make us victorious in the battle of life. To fortify our weakness the very power of God has been placed at our dis-

posal. Among the means given us to draw down upon our souls divine grace *prayer and the Sacraments* hold the first place. God has given to man the *promise of efficacy to prayer*, which is a means as honorable as it is easy and infallible, of placing ourselves as often as we desire, in direct communication with *"our Father, who is in heaven."* As to the Sacraments, which are most powerful means of grace and salvation adapted to all the conditions and circumstances of life, *they confer by themselves* grace upon all those who do not oppose any obstacles to their action. How great is the goodness of God exhibited in the Sacrament of Penance, when on condition of sincere repentance and humble avowal of sin made under the seal of most inviolable secrecy, all sins are forgiven, no matter how numerous or how grievous! Above all, what can we say of the adorable Eucharist, that marvelous invention of love, from Him who, not wishing to leave us orphans, has found the means, on His return to His Father, of continuing to abide in our midst! Under the species or appearances of bread and wine, Jesus Christ Himself dwells in our tabernacles, in our churches, the same as He was in the manger of Bethlehem and on the Cross of Calvary; there He ever invites us to seek from Him strength and consolation; unceasingly He renews, in an unbloody manner, the sacrifice of Golgotha offering Himself perpetually as a victim to His heavenly Father to atone for the sins of the world; there He carries His love for the creature to the utmost limits. He, infinite Majesty, deigns to unite Himself really and in the closest manner to all who receive Holy Communion; He clothes them with His divine strength, and deposits in their body the germ of resurrection to a most happy immortality.

Hence the man, who does not attain the end of his creation and elevation to the supernatural order, cannot attribute his loss to any one but himself. He is like a poor man, who chooses voluntarily to die of famine in the very presence of inexhaustible abundance, when he could make ample provision to all his wants. ("The Future Life," pp. 422–425.)

III.—Teaching of Jesus Christ Concerning Worship

274. The doctrine of Jesus Christ concerning worship corresponds fully to the ideas which He has given us regarding God and man. God being a spirit wishes to be adored *in spirit and truth.*

Our readers among the clergy will find in Cardinal Franzelin's "De Deo Uno," sect. 4; thesis 35, p. 378, a very thoughtful and satisfactory explanation of the text of St. John's Gospel (4, 24): "*God is a spirit, and they that adore Him, must adore Him in spirit and in truth.*" See also the ascetical work "The Spiritual Life and Prayer" (ch. xx), "The True Adorers." (London, Leamington, Art and Book Company, 1900.)

Man himself, being also a spirit, owes to God a spiritual homage, a worship therefore that should be above all interior; it should be the homage of the intellect and of the will. But because man is also material as to his bodily organism, he owes the whole of himself to God, both as to his body and as to his soul; he is therefore bound to add the *exterior* worship to the internal one. And finally destined to live in society and beholden to God for the advantages which he derives from association with his fellows, man is bound to honor and worship God not only as an individual, but also as a member of civil society; he should therefore render to God the homage of *public worship.*

Freed from the cruel and superstitious practices of pagan worship, and also from the numerous and hard ceremonial details imposed upon the Jews by Moses, the new worship is the most sublime and the most pure, and at the same time, most worthy of God and most appropriate to man.

General Remarks Concerning the Teaching of Jesus Christ

275. In order to make all that is most wonderful in the teaching of Jesus Christ better understood a few remarks here will not be without benefit.

1. We have seen that even the unbelievers themselves

cannot but acknowledge the intrinsic perfection of the morality of the Savior and its *incomparable superiority* over all the philosophic or religious system, that the world has ever seen. Its completeness, its purity, its elevation, its efficacy have never ceased to astound the mind of men. (See in Part X, ch. III, what Jouffroy says of the catechism, which is the abridgment of the Gospel truths.) There has been recently discovered a fragment from the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in which he speaks of the Gospel in a manner so full of praise, that the only thing wanting in it is a sincere acknowledgment of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

276. Here let me call the attention of the readers to a remarkable work entitled, "The Truth and Divine Origin of Catholicism Demonstrated by its own Enemies," Italian edition by Bertou. The author passes in review the leading dogmas and moral teachings of the Catholic Church and confirms her doctrine on each of her tenets by the statements, avowals, and admissions of her bitterest enemies. The principal value of this remarkable work is enhanced by the fact that the author, in quoting the sayings of hundreds of unbelieving or heretical writers, never fails to state the work, chapter and page, where those sayings are to be found. An English translation of this standard work would be a most valuable contribution to the controversial literature already so numerous in defense of Catholic truth.

2. At the time when the Savior appeared, Polytheism was universal; the grossest errors, the most ridiculous and the most cruel superstitions had for ages filled the earth; there reigned in place of the virtues driven out by idolatry, all the vices personified in the divinities, to which men offered homage. There was nothing to presage or to lead men to anticipate the preaching and enforcing of the admirable doctrine, which was to be taught in a corner of Judea. Though the Gospel is the crowning and fulfilling of the law of Moses, it was so little expected that when it did come, all Judaism rose to protest that it did not recognize it; it did more, it crucified its Author (n. 253).

3. And again this teaching, so wonderful in itself, and more wonderful still if we consider the times when it appeared, fell from the lips of *an obscure carpenter of Galilee,* who up to that time had lived by the labor of his hands. This circumstance did not escape the notice of the Jews, to whom he spoke; *"And the Jews wondered, saying: How does this man know letters, having never learned?"* they asked each other in their astonishment (John 7, 15). Another circumstance no less worthy of remark is, that we find in the words of Christ no trace of the prejudices of His time or people. His words have all the characteristics of truth: universality, eternity, unchangeableness; the Gospel will remain the standard divine book for all men and for all times; the sermon on the Mount is the ever enduring, unchangeable code destined to guide all consciences. *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass away,"* said Jesus Christ. (Mark 13, 31.)

4. *The manner or method followed by the Savior in teaching* is no less astounding. He does not discuss, He does not argue; He speaks not as the scribes and Pharisees, but as one having authority, as a sovereign master: *"tamquam potestatem habens."* The ministers answered: *"Never did man speak like this man"* (John 7, 46). And yet nothing could equal the *touching simplicity* of His teaching. He expressed Himself in a natural manner without any attempt at eloquence, without excitement, and He adapts His language to the weakness of His hearers. It was indeed to the little and humble, to the simple and upright souls, that it pleased Him most to reveal the divine secrets (Matt. 11, 25). Almost all His dogmatic teachings, in their nature so sublime, and in their brevity most rigorously exact, are expressed in the form of *sentences* or *proverbs* which makes them easy to remember; or else it is in *parables* charming in their details which imprint themselves on the mind and memory of the hearers, yet more often it is by admirable illustrations borrowed from surrounding objects, the events of the moment or the habits and usages of life. The result

was that the multitude followed His steps for days at a time without thought of food, even into the desert itself. (See in the "Religious Miscellany," of Cardinal Wiseman: "The Parables of the New Testament," and Fonck on Parables.)

5. Jesus is no less admirable *when He encounters His adversaries.* How often did the Pharisees and doctors of the law put to Him captious questions in their vain desire to have Him contradict Himself or the law of Moses, and thus render Him ridiculous or odious before the people! The answers of Jesus, always lucid, clear-cut and decisive, baffled their cunning and turned their questions to their confusion; in consequence of which they dared no longer to question Him. (Matt. 22, 46.)

6. Let us recall what we have said of *the miraculous efficacy* of the teaching which had transformed the individual, the family and society (see Part X, ch. II). Despite all the passions conspiring against it, Christ's doctrine has founded among men true fraternity, true equality and true liberty; it has softened manners and customs, established the unity and indissolubility of marriage, and thereby secured the permanence of the family. In a word, it has created modern civilization. Whilst the doctrines of Socrates and Plato have remained almost sterile, the word of Christ has given birth, in all countries and throughout all the centuries, to most admirable virtues, to miracles of self-sacrifice and devotedness. Even in our day we see civilization advance or recede according as people adopt or reject it.

277. First Objection Taken from Similarities Between Christianity and other Religions. There is one chief objection, more general in character than the others, which is put forth in our day with high sounding display of erudition, in public writings or lectures which treat of "The History of Religions." It is well known that under this name the enemies of religion pretend to confound the only true religion with the many old and new religious errors, by which man has disfigured the divine work. By this shrewd proceeding they mean to bring into contempt the true Faith and those that profess it. This objection is drawn from the analogies

or resemblances which are found to exist between Christianity and the false religions of antiquity. These men claim that these resemblances prove that the Christian religion is simply an evolution from anterior religions, and that like them, it has a human origin. Though this objection is without any value, we consider it necessary to refute it because of the popularity which it enjoys at the present time, and of the evil impression which it creates in many minds. However, it is easily seen, we cannot devote much time or space to this subject. To those who would wish for a greater development of the question we would advise the reading of the "History of Religions," 5 volumes edited by C. C. Martindale, S. J.

278. Answer. 1. It is important above all to remark that this objection does not in the least impair the force of the ten proofs which we give of the divinity of Christianity. Now when a truth is solidly established by proofs inherent to itself, there can be no valid objection to urge against it. We are far from denying that there are resemblances between the religion of Jesus Christ and false religions; the contrary would be very extraordinary and indeed impossible, as we shall prove; but it is none the less true that the Christian religion alone offers convincing and numerous proofs of its divinity. Therefore, far from fearing the light, it urges and solicits conscientious examination and study; it dreads only ignorance and bad faith. False religions, on the contrary, no matter in what form they present themselves, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Zoroastrism or Mazdeism, Confucianism, Induism, etc., cannot stand the searching investigation of reason and the rigorous examination of science. As Augustin Thierry used to say towards the end of his life: "After all, in matters of religion, it is Christianity alone that counts." What then do those alleged resemblances amount to, if it remains true that Christianity alone is divine and obligatory for all men?

Our conclusion is all the more legitimate, because among the characteristics, which show forth the divinity of Christianity, there are some which belong to it exclusively, and to which there is nothing *analagous* in all the pagan and false religions that ever existed upon the face of the globe.

Where, for instance, shall we find anything that resembles the prophecies, so numerous and so precise as they are, which, during centuries, have prepared the nations for the coming of Christ and which have been fully verified in Him? Where shall we find miracles innumerable, most striking and absolutely undeniable as those performed by Jesus and His disciples acting in His name? What religion, I ask, presents so complete and so perfect a doctrine concerning God and man and the relations which they bear to each other? Where is the founder of religion whose *real* not *legendary* life, such as that of Buddha, can be compared with the historical and most admirable life of the author of Christianity? These striking facts, peculiar to the religion of Jesus Christ and to it alone, show most clearly that the hand of God is there. "*Digitus Dei est hic*" (this is the finger of God). (Exod. 8. 19.)

2. We know that God never left the world without supernatural light; that at the very beginning there was a revelation (nn. 137–138). The successive communications of God to mankind, the memory of which must have been perpetuated throughout the centuries, even among pagan nations, are quite sufficient to explain many resemblances; all religions have necessarily borrowed more or less from this common source.

3. Far from its being difficult to account for the points of resemblance, which exist between Christianity and the religions of the East, more particularly Buddhism, it can be shown that this resemblance *must necessarily exist* to a certain extent. The nature of man, we have already said, is essentially religious; as Tertullian well said, "*Anima hominis est naturaliter Christiana*" (man's soul is naturally Christian); in consequence man has been defined: A religious animal. Now religion is intended to satisfy this instinctive want in our nature; hence spring the different forms of worship, whatever be their origin, human or divine, which must obviously bear to one another some resemblance or analogy. We shall explain this by comparisons or illustrations. The royal palaces, which are to be found in the capitals of kingdoms, are for the most part arranged in a similar manner. In all are

to be found a throne room, reception rooms, private apartments for the sovereign, others for his family and suite; in all there are staircases, anti-chambers, doors and windows. Can any one argue from all this that they were built by the same architect and on the same plan? By no means. These resemblances arise from the fact that these buildings have the same purpose; to be the residence of the chief of State. For the same reason one railway station resembles another, one theater another theater. It is the same as to social institutions; in all countries of the world, deliberative assemblies, the tribunals, the armies have certain marks of resemblance, because everywhere they have the same purpose and the same requirements.

The application of these remarks to our case is easy enough. True religion, as well as false religion, is intended to satisfy the spiritual aspirations of the heart of man. Among pagans as well as among Christians, there exists the desire to worship and to pray; there is felt an instinctive need of expiation and sacrifice; everywhere we witness the terrors of conscience, the tendency towards the supernatural, the fear of invisible beings, the aspiration to a future life. As all religions are destined to answer these longings and appease these cravings of the human soul, it is but natural that all of them should resemble each other in many ways.

Let us suppose men deprived of the benefit of revelation and divine religion. What would then happen? They would naturally seek for that which they lack, they would fashion it for themselves, according to their lights. Feeling the need of revelation of some sort they would be inclined to harken to the first person they might meet, claiming to be a prophet, without taking the precaution of exacting his official credentials to verify his right to that title; feeling the want of a liberator, they would follow him who would proclaim that he could and that he would save them; hungering after religious emotions, they would organize rites, ceremonies, feasts, chants, capable of exciting and fostering these feelings; aspiring to the supernatural, they would address to invisible beings their prayers for health and the goods of the earth.

It is in this way that is explained the appearance in every age of prophets, messiases, so-called wonder-workers, founders of religion, inventors of soul-stirring ceremonies.

If this is in brief the true history of the formation of human religions, is it not clear that divine Religion, though quite different on essential points, must inevitably resemble them in many ways?

279. Let us go into some details that will better enable us to understand the reason of these resemblances.

The dogmas taught by Christianity are, at least in part, truths which reason may attain through its own unaided powers. If revelation has added to the treasury of natural truths, it has, first of all, extended and perfected the knowledge of truths of the natural order; it has rendered this knowledge more accessible to the mass of mankind and has given to it a clearness and certainty, which too often is found wanting when reason is left to itself. Is there anything astonishing in this that, where a ray of reason is left, there should be found, even among pagan nations, certain dogmas that recall parts of the teachings of the Gospel?

It should be the same as to *Christian morals*, for in reality they are nothing else but human reason developed, supernaturalized, illuminated by a new light and enhanced in excellence by a number of precepts imposed by God. Now, is it to be wondered at that there should be found in false religions some moral principles resembling those of true Religion?

Man, who feels within himself disorderly inclinations and appetites condemned by conscience, easily understands that in order that the spirit may triumph over the flesh, he must resist the evil propensities to sensual pleasures, and discipline the body to suffering and self-denial. He also sees in this suffering a means of appeasing the Deity, provoked to anger by his guilty deeds. Hence there naturally arises the moral tendency in man to *mortify* the passions, to fasting, to corporal sufferings voluntarily inflicted on himself. We shall therefore find in the purer religions a tendency to lead an austere life adapted to overcoming the inordinate cravings

of nature, and to make use for that purpose of the means instinctively prompted by the voice of nature. Why, for instance, should not the Buddhist monks employ the same means to become more perfect as those adopted by ascetics and religious orders of Catholicism?

As to *exterior worship,* which is only the outward expression of the inward sentiments of the soul toward God, there is nothing surprising that it should exhibit striking resemblances in the different religions. What does man desire by this worship but to testify to his Maker and Lord his respect and adoration, his submission and gratitude, and to obtain from Him benefits and pardon? What else could he do but have recourse to the means which his reason, his imagination, his feelings and all nature around him suggest and furnish? Why should not true religion make use of the same methods? Why, for instance, should the Christian religion abstain from the use of incense, of candles, sacred chants, music, genuflections, prostrations, sacrifice, in a word, of everything which may tend to acknowledge the sovereign dominion of God over His creatures, to implore His help and pardon, to form and maintain religious sentiments in the heart of man? Does not all this bring the creature back to his true destiny, and restore the rights of God?

280. Our conclusion is all the more legitimate, that God, in enjoining by revelation exterior worship upon man, should in His wisdom and goodness *have made it in harmony* with the tendencies and necessities of the nature with which He endowed mankind. In thus appreciating and accepting that which man had found by himself, and which had made the most vivid and durable impression upon his mind, viz., religious practices rendered venerable by their antiquity, did not God thereby perform an act of supreme wisdom and bounty? Was it not rendering more easy to man the practice of his duties? Hence, when He prescribed to Moses the rites, ceremonies and feasts of the law, even to their minutest details (see Leviticus), without obliging the Hebrews to renounce completely their religious usages, God was acting as a tender and far-sighted Father. On her part, the Catholic Church,

entrusted by her divine Founder with the task of determining the religious practices of the people, other than the sacraments, which are of divine institution, and of regulating the details of worship, was not under any obligation to do away with the legitimate customs and usages of the converts who came to her from Judaism or from Paganism. Inheriting, as she did, the Old Law, it was just that the Church should borrow from it a part of its rites and ceremonies. As to usages belonging to purely human religions, but good or indifferent in themselves, why should she not preserve them, after she had purified and sanctified them, and thus consecrate for all time to the honor and worship of the Creator that which had served in the past for the worship of the creature? Why should she be expected to suppress all the pagan feasts? Was it not enough to replace them by Christian solemnities bearing exterior resemblances to them? It was evidently a way to abolish the more easily idolatrous or evil customs and usages.

281. Remark. Let us add an observation which flows from what we have said about the teaching of Jesus Christ (n. 268). How could it be that this doctrine, this morality, this worship of such absolute perfection, answering so fully all the demands of reason and so admirably adapted to all the aspirations of the human heart, should come from the lips of an obscure workman of Galilee? How was it that a teaching so full, so complete and so perfect, which could neither have been presaged nor foreseen, should fall, without *divine intervention*, from the lips of a man, who up to that time had lived by the labor of his hands, a stranger to the disputes of the schools and of the sects, which divided the Judaism of his day? How could such a man perform the enormous labor which would be required of him to evolve and create that eclecticism, to which some writers would attribute the origin of Christianity? How could a simple artisan and the son of a carpenter, as his fellow-townsmen called him (Mark 6, 3; Matt. 13, 55), whose youth had all been spent in the midst of his immediate relatives, and who died at a not advanced age, how, I say, could he have been

able to traverse, as it were, all the East so as to study its various and contradictory doctrines? How could he have read in their own language the Indian, Persian and Chinese books, which had not been translated into his language? How could he have made a choice so absolutely perfect among the endless mixture of doctrines to be found in these books, all so opposed to each other and replete with error? As to contemporary philosophy, it is certain that Jesus Christ never studied it. We can on this point be content with the assertion of Renan: "Jesus Christ," says he, "had no knowledge of Greek culture, neither directly nor indirectly. He had no knowledge either of the fantastic teachings of the Scholasticism at Jerusalem." The reader will easily understand the significance of such language from the blasphemous lips of one who denied the divinity of Christ. One thing is to possess knowledge, and quite another thing to give external manifestations of it.

Conclusion. We have said quite enough about the futility of this objection, which it pleases some men of our day to represent as an overwhelming refutation of the true religion. If Christianity necessarily resembles, as to some points, other religions, it thoroughly differs from each of them in a multitude of other respects absolutely essential. Undoubtedly it comprises everything that is good and holy, which may be found elsewhere, but in it there is no mingling of error or imperfection. It alone possesses perfect harmony among the various elements which compose it; it alone completely satisfies all the religious instincts of man; it alone remains ever young, true to itself; it alone promises to last as long as humanity. The exterior resemblances and analogies which exist between the divine religion and human productions do not destroy the *originality* of the divine work; they only prove with what perfection it is adapted to meet all the legitimate requirements of the human soul. In fine, whilst false religions offer *no certain characteristic* marks or credentials of a divine message addressed to mankind and contain maxims and precepts contrary to truth and morals, Christianity alone, with its dogmatic and moral teaching of the highest character

and most exalted purity, offers us numberless and most convincing proofs of a work truly divine.

282. Second Objection Taken from the Comparison between Christianity and Buddhism. We feel a certain amount of repugnance to occupying ourself about a form of religion which is so little worthy of engaging the attention of a serious man; but the circumstances of our times oblige us to say enough to warn those who might be dazzled by a false science (*falsi nominis scientia*, I Tim. 6, 20), and assertions as audacious as they are void of truth. If it were merely a question of studying Buddhism by itself we would willingly acknowledge that it presents many points of interest for the historian of philosophy and religious thought. But that which does not deserve the slightest examination is the claim that Christianity owes its origin to Buddhism. And yet there have been rationalists who, to depreciate Christianity and to deprive it of dogmatic and moral pre-eminence, have imagined that they could set up *Buddhism* in opposition to it.

Let us hasten to declare that it is far from the truth to say that all rationalists participate in this excessive blindness. The greater number, on the contrary, loudly proclaim that Christianity is immensely superior to Buddhism. Let us cite a few striking examples. In his Westminster Lectures in 1879, Mr. Kuenen states that Christianity is as superior to Buddhism as life is superior to death, and heaven with its beatific vision is superior to Nirvanah, whatever that may be, and a living body is superior to a phantasm. Mr. Naville, in a speech at the Collège de France, expresses himself in about the same terms. M. J. J. Ampère, after enumerating the greater part of the analogies or resemblances, on which a certain class of writers place so much stress, does not hesitate to say that "the difference between the two religions, that of Christ, and that of Buddha is profound, radical; it is the difference between Theism and Pantheism; between the true and the absurd conception of God." M. Frank, in his ethical study of the Oriental nations, shows that the virtues taught by Buddhism remained utterly barren of beneficial results, because they lacked a solid basis, the sanction which

is found only in the correct knowledge of man's relation to his Maker.

283. Listen to the words of Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, who, as he says, has studied Buddhism during thirty years: "Brought up and fostered in the bosom of an admirable philosophy and religion, we devote but slight attention to studying their true value and the immense services they have rendered to us. We enjoy these benefits, whilst remaining indifferent and even ungrateful to them. Civilization never stops performing wonders in our midst. We profit by them, but we scarcely ever pause to inquire to what is due so much comfort, so much security, so much comparative enlightenment among the races to which we belong, whilst at our side a multitude of people remain semi-barbarous and have not been able, from the beginning of time, to form *either cultured associations or some kind of tolerable governments.* I believe that the study of Buddhism, in its general characteristics, will help us to solve this enigma and will reveal to us its secret. We shall see why a religion which to-day counts, perhaps, more adherents than any other, has done so little for the happiness of humanity, and we shall find the explanation of this impotency in the *strange, absurd and deplorable doctrines* which it has professed."

Further on he adds: "Notwithstanding appearances at times very specious, Buddhism is only *a long tissue of contradictions,* and it is not a calumny to say that it is spiritualism *without a soul,* virtue *without duty,* morality *without liberty,* a world *without God.* What can we conclude, what can we expect from such teachings? How many things should we have to forget before becoming its blind disciples? How low should we have to descend in the scale of civilization among the nations of the earth? The only service, and it is indeed an immense service, that Buddhism can render us, is to enable us, by *its sad contrast* with Christian civilization, *better to appreciate the inestimable value of our own belief* by showing what it costs humanity to be deprived of its highly beneficial effects."

These authorities, taken in great part from men either

hostile or indifferent to our Faith, might suffice to bring about the irrevocable condemnation of Buddhism. However, the circumstances of our times induce us to enter into further considerations concerning its teachings, dogmatic and moral. We shall first speak of *primitive and theoretic* Buddhism, that of the books, of which learned men generally speak, and afterwards we shall describe Buddhism *in its popular and practical bearings* on the conduct of those that profess it.

284. Historical Details. Its founder was Cakya-Mouni (the sage, the ascetic of the Cakyas), better known under the name of Buddha. Let us at once remark that we know his life only through biographies *written many centuries after his death.* The Buddhists themselves do not agree as to the time when he lived. Max Müller places his death in the year 477 before Christ; other Indian scholars fix the date at various times between 543 and 370. According to M. Senart, all that can be said with certainty may be reduced to two points: (1) Buddhism did have a founder; (2) this founder was an anchorite, an ascetic, who was not satisfied with the teachings of Brahmanism. As to the legends, *lacking in all historic value,* with which the history of Buddha has been embellished, they may well have been invented, in part at least, five or six centuries after his death, at a time when the Gospel was already introduced into India. In this way can easily be explained certain features of these legends, which resemble the facts of the Gospels. Let us also remark that these legends are far from being the same in all the Buddhist schools. They seem, however, to be conceived after a traditional type which is not without a certain grandeur quite conformable to the lofty imagery of Oriental peoples. Let us not forget that in theory, Buddhism absolutely rejects *miracles;* according to its teaching every thing happens through the unchangeable laws of nature which bind together beings, no matter what may be their perfection and grandeur. And yet in reality the history of Buddha is full of a multitude of marvelous facts, which make him the most *supernatural* being that ever existed! We are thus in presence

of one of those contradictions with which this strange religion is crowded.

The doctrine of the founder of Buddhism was written only by his disciples, and the *Canon,* or recognized catalogue of the books which contain it, was drawn up only in the year 88 before Christ. Buddhism, which is only the revolt of individual reason against the old Brahmanistic despotism and particularly against the unbrotherly and anti-social dogma of caste, overran the vast plain of Higher Asia and invaded China and Japan. It exists also in Thibet, Burmah, Siam, Ceylon, etc.

Let no one suppose, however, that Buddhism is always and everywhere identically the same. It is usual, it is true, to estimate the number of Buddhists at 350,000,000. There are some writers, as Rhys-Davids, for instance, who would put the number at 500,000,000; but all these are far from being *true* Buddhists. Thus in this number are included over 400,000,000 Chinese. Now, though the Chinese may sometimes include Buddha among the objects of their worship, they trouble themselves but little about his doctrines, and they do not call themselves Buddhists.

It is, however, certain that Buddhism has divided itself into two branches, which have assumed *quite opposite* and contradictory characters. Buddhism in the north adapting itself to the religious ideas of the people of those regions when it was introduced; it even became transformed into *downright idolatry.* In China it consists in placing Buddha and the personages of the Buddhist Olympus among the spirits from whom the worshippers implore favors for themselves and gifts for the bonzes or priests. In reality it is no longer Buddhism. On the other hand, in the south (Ceylon and the eastern peninsula of India), it has remained generally faithful to the system of its founder; its disciples still seek for Nirvanah by the practice of self-denial and penance. There are also in those parts Buddhist monasteries, where there are to be found at least apparent virtues, a profound faith in their doctrines and exact discipline.

A learned German statistician, Mr. Weismann, in his report of the number of adherents to the manifold forms of religious worship in Eastern countries, such as India, China and Japan, which he secured by personal observation in his extensive travels in those regions, speaking of Buddhism makes the following startling statement: "A searching examination and comparison convinced me that the sects or divisions of the Buddhist creed are counted by the hundreds. Hence it is historically true to say that, in point of number, the members professing the Roman Catholic Religion surpass not only all other Christian denominations, but also every form of un-Christian worship." Hence, if the question of religious truth were to be decided by the majority of votes, reliable statistics would easily determine the point at issue. As a matter of fact the Roman Catholic Church counts more adherents to her creed than any other religious belief whether Christian or anti-Christian.

I. Theoretic Buddhism or Buddhism of the Books

A. Dogmatic Part

285. First let us remark that the object of Cakya-Mouni (Buddha) was exclusively moral. He concerned himself but little about solving questions relating to the origin of man, the nature of God and other beings, and confined himself almost solely to practical precepts. His only object was to procure for himself and others *deliverance from the ills of earth,* and especially from the necessity of *rebirth, for life,* he held, *is always fatally wretched.* Hence we already see that Buddhism does not deserve the name of *religion,* for in nowise it answers the demands of the reason and heart of man.

As to its dogmatic part, on which morality is necessarily based, it abounds in errors and contradictions. Indeed, it includes:

1. *Pantheism,* or rather *positivism and atheism.* In reality, theoretic Buddhism nowhere affirms or denies in a formal manner the existence of a Supreme Being. On this capital

question Buddha and his disciples refuse to state clearly their own belief. It is, therefore, with good reason that the system has been called atheistic. And yet, strange to say, prayer and adoration form the object of one of its precepts! If we closely consider nations and individuals reputed to be Buddhistic, we find that they have several divinities to which they pray; here it is the serpent or the dragon; elsewhere and almost everywhere it is the devil; in the vast regions of the extreme East it is the worship of the ancestors' departed spirits which seems to dominate; and again in other places it is Buddha himself who has become the god of his disciples. In any case this diversity was inevitable; from the moment that the Buddhist doctrine systematically abstained from pronouncing itself as to the existence and nature of God, it left to its sectaires the liberty to form their own ideas on the subject and to choose the god or gods that pleased them best. It is certain that to the true Buddhist there is no personal God nor creation. As to the manner in which the world was produced, Buddha has said nothing, because he considered this knowledge unnecessary to the end he sought, that is, the deliverance from life, complete annihilation of personality.

2. The Buddhistic creed also includes *metempsychosis* or the rebirth or reincarnation of souls after death into other bodies. By an *inevitable law inherent to things,* suffering, according to this belief, is attached to fault or sin, and relative happiness to good actions. Whilst the wicked will be reincarnated in other bodies to expiate their sins, those who have lived well, will return to a new life under better conditions, and thus go on from transmigration to transmigration until the last term, the goal of all desires, Nirvanah, is finally reached.

3. But what is this Nirvanah after all? There is nothing more obscure to be found in the whole of Buddhism. The most probable opinion is that Nirvanah *is the absolute suppression of existence.* "Nirvanah," quite a number of Buddhist books teach, "cannot be either a place of sensible happiness or of intellectual felicity, nor consciousness or unconsciousness of self." What is it, therefore, if not the

negation of existence, nothingness itself? Moreover, the comparisons used by the Buddhists to explain the mysterious Nirvanah furnish us with a similar idea; it is the absorption of the creature into the Great Being, the universal being, an unconscious and immovable mass; a state of passive and negative rest, void of all thought and of all sensibility; in a word, it is the equivalent of *annihilation.*

4. The principle upon which Buddhism grounds its theory of metempsychosis and this strange happiness is *pessimism.* Accordingly, *life is evil,* and true happiness consists in being freed from it; through virtue one escapes from the law which obliges him who dies to be born again in atonement for his sins. He who shall not be defiled will not be born again. As to the cause of all the ills suffered during these successive lives, Buddha has placed it in the desire to live, in attachment to life. It is, therefore, necessary above all to extinguish this desire in the heart, to renounce completely the love of personal existence, which is nothing else than the justification of suicide.

Conclusion. From the preceding statements it clearly appears that all that can be said of atheism, positivism, nihilism, must be applied to dogmatic Buddhism. Is this a doctrine capable of leading the soul to virtue and to what is right and good? And this metaphysical theory, which we have exposed, was it not manifestly conceived by raving dreamers and for dreamers? Annihilation! what an encouragement to virtue! what a splendid reward to goodness! And yet, we must not forget that the aim of Buddhism is the practice of virtue: it is a moral end that it is supposed to be seeking.

Remark. Here the disgusted reader cannot help exclaiming: Is not the Buddhistic philosophy a tissue of absurdities, glaring contradictions, and stupid assertions, involving the often exploded theories of idealism, skepticism and other vagaries repugnant alike to Christian principles and common sense? And yet, in this enlightened century of ours, in the full splendor of Gospel light and Christian civilization, men and women are to be found ready to prefer the teachings of Buddha to the doctrines of Jesus Christ. This deplorable

apostasy need not surprise us: for it has been foretold nineteen centuries ago by the Apostle St. Paul, who in his Second Epistle to his disciple Timothy (4, 3–5) speaks thus: *"There shall be a time, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but according to their desires they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: And will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables."*

B. Moral Part

286. Quite strange and erroneous is the dogmatic theory upon which is based the morality of Buddhism. However, in itself this morality contains some ideas most exalted in many respects; it enjoins the renunciation and repression of the passions. It is true, this renunciation is carried to excess; for, according to its principles, it is necessary not only to uproot from the heart everything evil, but even every desire and every affection, though in itself good or, at least, indifferent. The duty of the Buddhist monks, and it is they who form true Buddhism—lay people being incapable of attaining Nirvanah—is to reach complete inertia, a perfect moral quietism. Bound to fasting, to prayer, to correction from others, to the avowal of their faults, the ascetics (Cramanas or Bhikshus), mendicants, must live on alms, practice celibacy and absorb themselves in the meditation of non-existence, to which they aspire; this is their only occupation. As to those who are not monks, they are commanded to love men and to desire to bring them to Nirvanah, that is, to have them delivered from the ills of life.

287. Conclusions. (1) We have already remarked, this morality of Buddhism is not true morality, because it lacks a *basis;* not coming from God, it presupposes neither legislator nor judge nor pardon. It is, moreover, without efficacious sanction; annihilation is no reward, and existence is not, in itself, a punishment capable of restraining a criminal. Moreover, a law that exists by itself, viz., not emanating from any superior law giver, an inexorable law, which bears as its sanction an inevitable fatalism, is truly something wholly

opposed to reason and can produce only despair. For the Buddhist life, no matter under what aspect, is naught else but a long chain of miseries, a real evil which one must get rid of as quickly as possible. Let us add that to attain this end the Buddhist sees himself constrained to lead an existence, not only devoid of all pleasure, of all earthly joy, but filled with renunciation of self, mortification and continual penance. And when he will have thus tormented himself during one or many existences, what has he to expect? The destruction of his individuality, annihilation, or, at the least, passing as an atom into the unconscious mass of the Universe! And these are the moral principles which men dare set up against those of Christianity!

(2) If, at first sight, Buddhist morality seems to have about it something exalted, it is in reality nothing else than a kind of stoic perfection, an inertia or indifference leading to egotism and pride. Moreover, the charity of the Buddhists is in contradiction with the precepts enjoined upon them to restrain every sentiment and every desire, even the desire of life. And then, who does not see the vast abyss between such charity and Christian charity? "We must acknowledge," says the rationalist Oldenberg, "an intrinsic difference between these two principles of morality; the Buddhistic conception of benevolence and Christian charity. . . . We may say that the love of benevolence, which shows itself in Buddhist teaching, a sentiment partly negative and partly positive, approaches somewhat to Christian charity without ever attaining its height, somewhat as the beatitude of Nirvanah, which very different, at its best, from the concept of beatitude according to Christian ideas, is but an uncertain and vacillating image of it."

Remark. The relative moral perfection, which is to be found in primitive or theoretic Buddhism, a purely human and philosophic creation, cannot surprise or astonish us Catholics; we know that man retained, after the Fall, his moral and intellectual powers; if they have been weakened, they have not been destroyed.

To do supernatural good, in other words, to perform virtu-

ous acts meritorious of heavenly recompense, we absolutely require the help of divine grace; but this help is not indispensably necessary to enable us to lead, within certain limits, and for some length of time, an honest life, and to observe, if not all, at least some of the precepts of the natural law. Hence, Catholic theologians explain in this sense the words of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (2, 14): *"The Gentiles who have not the* (Mosaic) *law, do by nature those things, that are of the law."*

II. Practical and Popular Buddhism

288. What we have been saying applies only *to theoretic and primitive* Buddhism, that found in the books. Buddhism is quite a different thing in its practical and popular reality. There are found between it and Christianity differences much more profound. In place of abolishing religious practices tinged with superstition, it has multiplied idolatrous rites and observances, and at an early state of its existence, it became a kind of *polytheism* and *superstitious magic*. "The instincts of humanity," says very truly de Broglie, "have been stronger than theory; the idea or notion of God and of a future life has reappeared, but in the form of superstition, in a religion whose true doctrine is atheistic and nihilistic."

289. A Few Words as to the Spread of Buddhism. It is an easy matter to explain the astonishing good fortune of this religious system, which shook the foundation of Brahminism and even threatened to replace it completely. The rapid propagation of Buddhism is due to various causes. A religious and social protest against the tyranny of old Brahminism, which had prevailed for centuries, it easily drew to itself the mass of the people by its proclamation of fraternity and the abolition of caste. Contrary to the practice of the Brahmins, who reserved to themselves the privilege of studying and teaching the science of religion and the means of attaining final happiness, Buddha and his disciples preached

in public and to everybody; they declared all men equal before the *Universal Law,* and called women as well as men to religious life. The impure Dasyu as well as the Brahmin, the criminal as well as the just man, the widow, the abandoned wife, all could find in the monastic state an honorable and peaceful retreat. Moreover, the comparative simplicity and brevity of Buddhistic doctrine and its morality, altogether natural and quite tolerant for the laity, could not arouse against it the passions of individuals or of the people at large. Far from condemning superstitions, on the contrary, it encouraged them and increased their number. Moreover, it enjoyed, for a long time, the protection of the sovereigns of the country. It was only after having reigned in India for over a thousand years in competition with Brahminism, its rival, that it spread throughout the neighboring countries.

290. Conclusion. Let us close this sketch of Buddhism by quoting the judgment that the learned Orientalist, Mgr. de Harlez, pronounces upon it. "The comparison which some writers have attempted to institute between Christianity and Buddhism has nothing serious in it. Buddhism contains some moral principles exalted to a certain extent, and that is all. Its metaphysics, or dogmatic teaching (n. 285), is absurd, and in no way differs from materialism. It is so also as to its tenets concerning man and the creation of the world. The foundation of its morality is the irrational, absurd belief in metempsychosis—transmigration of souls. It offers to mankind no other prospect than a life passed in privation and penance, to end by non-existence, or, what comes to the same thing, by the destruction of all personality. The learned Buddhists of our day deny the charge of atheism; they claim to honor God and to contemplate Him as the *Universal Law.* But this is only self-deception; it is throwing dust into the people's eyes. This law is a pure abstraction, and can never be a personal and active being. Besides, if we would simply set the Lord's Prayer side by side with all the recognized books of Buddhism, we will see at a glance the infinite distance that separates them."

Besides, as Doctor Aiken remarks in his work referred

to below, for our chief knowledge of the legendary lore that enriches the person of Buddha, we are thrown upon Buddhist books, whose integrity has, to a large extent, to be taken on faith, and not one of which can be proved to be as old as the synoptic Gospels. Cardinal Newman, in an interesting letter to W. S. Lilly on the subject of Buddhism and Christianity, very pertinently says: "To prove the authenticity and date of one of our Gospels we are plunged into a maze of manuscripts of various dates and families, of various patristic testimonies and quotations, and to satisfy the severity of our critics, there must be an absolute coincidence of text and concordance of statements in these various manuscripts put forward as evidence. If a particular passage is not found in all discovered and *reliable* manuscripts, it is condemned. . . . Why are we not to ask for evidence parallel to this before we receive the history of Buddha?" (W. S. Lilly, "The Claims of Christianity," London, 1894, ch. 2.)

The same writer, Dr. Aiken, of the Catholic University of America, concludes his interesting discussion on "Buddhism viewed in the light of Christianity" with the following appropriate reflections: "Buddhism is all but dead. In its huge organism the faint pulsations of declining life are still discernible, but its power of activity is gone, never to be restored. A human and imperfect work, it is destined to go the way of all things human. The spread of Christian civilization over the benighted East will cause its inevitable destruction. Such being the system that glories in the name of Buddha, we need not share the groundless fears of a few timid souls who look with alarm on the recent futile attempts to secure a following for Buddhism in Christianity. So long as the human mind retains its power of discriminating judgment, Christianity has nothing to fear from Buddhism. It will benefit, not suffer, by the comparison. To abandon the wisdom of Christ for the vagaries of Buddha would be as unreasonable as to prefer husks to bread, to turn from the pure stream of the fountain to the fetid waters of the stagnant pool, to grope in the night by the flame of the flickering candle, rather than to walk securely in the full light of day. Between the claims

of Jesus and those of Buddha it is easy to make the proper choice. To Him, who is in truth the Light of the world, every man of sense will turn, repeating the words of the great Apostle, *"Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."* (John 6, 69.)

CHAPTER III

TENTH PROOF

The Truth of Christianity Demonstrated by the Divinity of Jesus Christ, Its Founder

First Argument

The Incomparable Holiness Which Christ Exhibited

291. We have seen the eminent sanctity of the dogmatic and moral teaching of Jesus. His whole life was no less admirable; it was His teaching reduced to practice; there was no precept imposed by Him that He did not practice Himself; not a virtue preached, of which He did not give the most perfect example in His own person. Contrary to the ways of ordinary legislators, and especially to the ways of impostors, He first acted, then He preached the *"things which Jesus began to do and to teach."* (Acts 1, 1.) He could indeed say with confidence as to all the duties of man towards God, towards his neighbor and towards himself: *"For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also."* (John 13, 15.)

1. It suffices to read the Gospels to be convinced that *all the virtues* were found in Jesus in a divine degree and in equipoise so exact that their marvelous combination has made of His person the very type and *ideal of perfection.* Whilst among men, even the most excellent, human infirmity may reveal itself in some way, and the absolute ideal, if it exists in any biography, is always a mingling of fiction and history,

in Jesus, and in Him alone, we find the union of *ideal perfection* and pure historic reality. This perfection was never untrue to itself for even a moment, neither in the obscurity of life at Nazareth, nor in the midst of the crowds, whose rudeness and indiscretion He had to bear, nor at the feast of Cana, nor in the ignominy of His trial, nor on Calvary, where He expired in the midst of inexpressible sufferings, abandoned by His own, insulted by His triumphant enemies, and as if forsaken by His Eternal Father. "Never," says Strauss, "never will it be possible to rise higher than Jesus, nor to imagine anyone who might be His equal." "Jesus Christ," says Renan, "will never be surpassed."

2. Jesus Christ had enemies always on the alert to spy into all His acts, to scrutinize all His words, in the hope of finding Him at fault. Nevertheless, His virtue was so pure, so undoubted, that He had the right to utter this challenge, which remained without an answer: *"Who amongst you shall convince Me of sin?"* (John 8, 46.) More still, on the day of His Passion, despite the false testimony of purchased witnesses, the pagan judge was obliged to proclaim His innocence not less than five times. Moreover, modern unbelief itself, after having sought everywhere in the life and words of Jesus Christ for a cause or pretext to reproach Him with, has had to bow before Him and give homage to His virtue. If it refuses to bend the knee before *His divinity,* it willingly acknowledges that He is *the Wise Man* above all.

3. And then, whilst all the virtues shine forth in Jesus with the greatest splendor, there was none which appeared in a brighter light, or which drew the hearts of His hearers to Him more than His *ravishing love.* There is not a page in the Gospels that does not furnish the most touching proofs of this. "Jesus Christ," says Lacordaire, "has carried the power of love even to tenderness, and a tenderness so new, that there had to be a name created for it, and that it forms a species apart in the analysis of human sentiments; it has been called evangelical unction." Jesus Christ was *tender towards all men;* it is He that uttered these words: *"Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least*

brethren, you did it to Me" (Matt. 25, 40), words which gave birth to Christian fraternity, and which continue every day to bring forth prodigies of heroism and unselfish sacrifice. He was *tender towards sinners;* He sat at their table, and when the pride of the scribes and Pharisees reproached Him with this, He answered: *"They that are in health need not a physician, but they that are sick."* (Matt. 9, 12.) When He saw the publican that had ascended on a tree to see Him, He thus spoke to him: *"Zacheus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide in thy house."* (Luke 19, 5.) If a woman, who was a sinner, approaches and ventures to anoint His feet with a precious ointment, to the great scandal of a numerous assembly, He reassures her by the immortal words: *"Many sins are forgiven her because she hath loved much."* (Luke 7, 47.) If they bring to Him a woman taken in adultery, with the hope of eliciting from Him a sentence which might compromise Him as guilty of excessive mildness or of excessive rigor, He answers: *"He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."* (John 8, 7.) He is *tender towards His country,* though extremely ungrateful towards Him, and seeing from afar the city's walls, He sheds tears, saying: *"O, Jerusalem Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee! how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not?"* (Matt. 23, 37.) He is *tender towards His friends,* even unto washing their feet, and permitting His beloved disciple to rest upon His breast in one of the most solemn moments of His life. Even at the last hour, He is meek and *tender towards His executioners,* and implores from His heavenly Father mercy and pardon on their behalf: *"Father,"* He cries, *"forgive them, for they know not what they do."* (Luke 23, 34.) No life on earth can ever offer such an admirable example of *light and love.*

292. 1. Remarks on the Sanctity of Jesus Christ. The character of Jesus, notwithstanding its incomparable perfection, is *natural and true;* it shows nothing false, no affectation, no constraint. If the divine nature displays itself by

the absence of the slightest imperfection, humanity allows itself to be seen in all the truth of natural emotions. As Jesus wished to show to all men, His brethren, the way to heaven, in the first place by His *example,* then by His *teaching,* He deigned to feel all the legitimate sentiments of humanity and to pass through all its trials. "*We have not,*" says St. Paul, "*a high priest who cannot have compassion on our infirmities, but one tempted in all things like as we are, without sin.*" (Heb. 4, 15.) Like ourselves Jesus has labored, prayed, shed tears, suffered. Like ourselves He loved His mother, His disciples, His friends, His country, the unfortunate, the forsaken; like ourselves He felt pity, sadness, trouble, fear and loneliness; like ourselves, and more than any of us, He has felt physical pain and mental grief. From the manger to the cross, in each of His acts as in each of His feelings, He can offer Himself as the model to imitate.

2. The perfection of the character and life of Jesus Christ is all the more striking that it is in such *contrast* to all His surroundings. Apart from His mother and a few chosen persons, who felt themselves attracted toward Him, Jesus came in contact only with a vile and carnal people, hypocritical doctors of the law, proud and haughty Pharisees, and with disciples themselves full of gross defects. What a contrast between the weaknesses, the vices, the furious hatred, by which He was encompassed, and His holiness, His tenderness, His pity, His unruffled patience!

3. The sanctity of Jesus Christ alone was a *creative sanctity;* notwithstanding its undoubted superiority, it is the *most easily imitated;* and it has in all times given birth to an infinite multitude of disciples. "No wise man," remarks Voltaire himself, "has ever had the least influence upon the people of the street where he lived, but Jesus Christ has influenced the whole world." His example, no less than His words, has not ceased to produce everywhere, for nineteen centuries, miracles of purity, obedience, humility, zeal, self-sacrifice, in a word, miracles of sanctity. In fact, what is a *Christian* worthy of the name but a man who bears in his soul, in his body, in his whole being, the imprint of Jesus

Christ, a man who endeavors to *conform his thoughts, his desires, his words and actions* to those of the divine model? A saint is nothing more than a great Christian, imitating the Saviour in a manner more complete, more perfect and more heroic. If the saints exert a powerful, moral influence over others, it is because they reproduce in their life certain features of the type of perfection, which they contemplate in Jesus Christ.

4. A reflection which will help us to understand still better this wonder is that Jesus is imitated even in things that are *repugnant to nature;* for it is *a leader crowned with thorns* that we are to follow in His life of humility, obedience and self-denial. If we examine Him in the manger, in His hidden life and in His public life, if we contemplate Him more particularly in His passion and in His death, we cannot fail to see Him exhibiting to us everywhere the example of virtues most contrary to our evil inclinations. And this example has been followed: "*They that are Christ's,*" says St. Paul, "*have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences.*" (Gal. 5, 24.) To advance in the way of perfection true Christians only strive to triumph over themselves in imitation of Him whom St. Paul calls the *image of the invisible God.* (Col. 1, 15.) *Vince teipsum* (Conquer thyself) is their motto.

5. If Jesus Christ has succeeded in reforming the world, it is because He made Himself *beloved.* This love is itself a miracle. Great men succeed in winning admiration, in exciting enthusiasm; but who is he, even amongst men of the rarest genius, that can say he was loved, loved above all by posterity, throughout the long centuries? "One individual alone," says Lacordaire, "has rendered all ages tributary to Himself, through a love that never dies; He alone has been loved in the past with a love tender and strong, intimate and fruitful, by an infinite multitude of souls, and to-day millions of human creatures are ready to die for Him." See in the 39th Conference the eloquent page where the same orator speaks of the love which Jesus Christ excites in men's souls.

Has there been a saint who has not ardently loved Jesus Christ? After St. Peter, who answered Him with sorrowing

tenderness "Thou knowest that I love Thee," St. Paul exclaims that nothing can separate him from the love which he has vowed to Jesus, whose adorable name he repeats in his Epistles two hundred and forty-three times. St. Augustine cannot find words to express the sweetness he finds in pronouncing His name. St. Bernard assures us that everything is insipid to him without the name of Jesus; that this name is honey to his mouth, melody to his ear, jubilation to his heart. Thus have spoken all the heroes of Christianity. This love for Jesus Christ continues to inflame noble hearts and to lead them to imitate Him all the more perfectly in proportion as their love is more pure and more ardent.

The principal characters or functions that we find in our divine Lord Jesus Christ are those of Teacher, King and Victim. As a Victim of infinite value He sacrificed His own life for our redemption and eternal salvation, and thus opened to redeemed mankind the portals of heaven, which sin had closed against them. As King He came to rule over the intellect and the will of man by requiring of him faith and submission to His teachings, and obedience to His commands, thus to sanctify him and make him worthy of eternal bliss. As Teacher He points out to us our lofty destiny, life everlasting, and furnishes in His Church the means for reaching it. When we look at Christ and consider particularly the sublimity of His doctrines and the unrivalled excellence of His moral teachings, we are amazed at their grandeur, and hardly venture to raise our eyes. Christianity, as history shows, has undoubtedly produced many great and admirable saints. We are enraptured with the charming beauty of their lives; they are truly the noblest among the children of men; the honor, pride and ornament of the human race. We are familiar with many of their marvellous, touching traits; with the zeal of the Apostles, the fortitude of martyrs, the meekness of confessors, and the spotless purity of virgins. But even the greatest among them, what are they, after all, but faint images and feeble copies of Christ, who is the highest type of moral beauty and holiness ever presented to the imitation of men, and who combines in Himself the excellence and merits of all His imi-

tators past, present and future. As the most brilliant stars grow pale and lose their splendor before the rising sun, so every sanctity and moral greatness, whether angelic or human, is, as it were, eclipsed before that of Christ, the Sun of eternal justice. He stands alone unrivaled, matchless and unsurpassed. Kind and gentle without weakness; humble and modest without servility; zealous for truth and justice without intolerance; firm and steadfast without stubbornness; patient without weariness. How compassionate to the suffering; how sweet and tender to unhappy sinners! On the other hand, with what force does He denounce the arrogance of the powerful; with what courage does He unmask the duplicity of the hypocrites! What logic in His reasoning; what wisdom in His answers (John 18, 20-21, 23); what equanimity and self-possession in all His actions, under the fiercest persecutions and severest trials! Indeed, it may be truly said that, if the Incarnation had not taken place, and God should decree to appear and walk on earth in human form, He could not manifest Himself more fitly than He did in the person of Jesus Christ.

We find that, at times, even the opponents of God's revelation, in their lucid intervals, pay eloquent homage to Christ. Thus Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in an essay entitled "Profession of Faith of a Savoyard Vicar," writes: "Is it possible that the Gospel, a book at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be Himself a mere man? What purity, what sweetness in His manners! What presence of mind, what truth in His replies! Where is the man, where is the philosopher, who could so live and so die without weakness and without ostentation? When Plato described an imaginary good man, loaded with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest reward of virtue, he described exactly the character of Jesus, the Son of Mary. The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable form that could be desired; that of Jesus expiring in the midst of agonizing pains, abused, insulted, cursed by a whole nation is the most horrible that

could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed, indeed, the weeping executioner, who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for His merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God."

And as to the moral influence of His doctrines, suffice it to say that, if mankind observed the precepts of Christ's Gospel, nothing else would be needed to perfect human nature, to exterminate sin and vice, to transform men into Christians, Christians into saints, and earth into a heavenly paradise. There is not a single principle of natural law, there is not a sound, moral precept of any sage or legislator, that is not contained in the teachings of Christ and engrafted on His evangelical code. Take away from all the religious, ethical systems opposed to Christianity the moral maxims, precepts and principles, which they have borrowed from the Gospel, and what will remain to them?—a code of tyrannical, arbitrary laws, more fit to rule the wild beasts of the forest than to govern free, intelligent, rational beings, such as we are. Hence every human word contrary to *His* word is an error and a lie; every law in contradiction to *His* law is tyranny and iniquity; every life in opposition to *His* life is sinful and corrupt. But if Christ had restricted His mission to the preaching of His sublime doctrines and precepts without accompanying them with the winning force of His example, He would never have wrought the mighty moral revolution that has regenerated the world; nor would He be adored to-day by the millions of His disciples of every nation, race and clime throughout the entire globe, from north to south, from the rising to the setting sun. Christ conquered the hearts of countless followers because He taught by example long before He began to teach by word. As the evangelist St. Luke tersely puts it, "*Jesus began to do and to teach.*" (Acts 1, 1.) And herein is hidden the sacred power of those touching words: "*Come to me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you*" (Matt. 11, 28); words most sweet, most consoling to the human heart, which, ever since the day they

were first uttered, have been the comfort of every sorrow-stricken soul, and even now ring out clear, a harmony of heaven, above the din, discord and despair of the human life of to-day. Yes, those words are like a peal of joy bells to all repenting sinners, making immortal melody in the temple of their soul. Amidst all the ever-recurring changes of time, Christ remains the same, yesterday, and to-day, and forever. He continues to be what He said that He was—"*the way, the truth and the life.*" (John 14, 6.) Whoever does not learn from Him and His Church man's final destiny and the path that infallibly leads to its attainment struggles in vain, gropes in darkness, and knows not whither he is going. Whoever does not listen to His voice, falls a prey to error and deceit; whoever fails to drink at the fountain of the Savior's immortal life (Isaias 12, 3), perishes from hunger and inevitably incurs the evils of spiritual death. (John 4, 13-14.)

Conclusion. Jesus, the perfect type of the highest perfection, could not have taught anything but the *truth*. It is impossible that the most revolting deceit should have been united in Him with the most admirable life that history ever offered to humanity. But Jesus Christ put Himself forward in the most formal manner as invested with a divine mission. *He is therefore really the Messenger of God, and the religion which He has brought into the world is divine.*

Second Argument

Christ Himself on Many Occasions Bore Emphatic Testimony to His Own Divinity

As we shall presently see, Christ Himself asserted, in the clearest language, that He possessed the attributes and perfections of the Deity, that He was the eternal Son of the living God. His peerless holiness demonstrated above affords the surest guarantee that He spoke the truth.

293. The divinity of the *mission* of Jesus Christ and that of His *work* is the question that we have treated up to this. Altogether different is the question of the divinity of *His per-*

son. Moses was also the *Messenger of God;* he also was entrusted with the mission of establishing a more perfect religion than that which preceded it, and yet the Jewish people never thought of considering him as God. Jesus Christ, on the contrary, *is adored as God* by all who for nineteen centuries have been proud to bear His name and to follow His doctrine. This fact is undoubted. But does Jesus deserve this adoration; *is He truly God?*

The answer to this question belongs, it is true, to dogmatic theology, but it appears to us that we should not pass it over altogether in silence. After having, up to this, been principally engaged in the study of our Lord Jesus Christ; after having set forth the prophecies, which announced His coming and His doings, and those which He made Himself; after having spoken of His life, His virtues, His miracles, His resurrection, His action on humanity, could we dispense ourselves from saying at least a few words about that which *crowns and explains all, viz., His divinity?* We cannot do so, especially as it is so easy to throw a resplendent light upon that fundamental and central truth of our holy religion.

We believe in the divinity of the *mission* of Jesus Christ, because He expressedly declared that He was sent by God, and He confirmed this mission by most irrefutable proofs. We must believe in the divinity of *His person, if He has positively given Himself out as God.*

Now, it is a fact absolutely certain, attested by a great number of perfectly clear texts, that Jesus *affirmed Himself to be God.* Without the least ambiguity, and in a multitude of circumstances, He declared that He was God, the Son of God, equal in everything to the Father Who had sent Him.

Let us come at once to the proofs.

294. I. The following is a very simple, but a most convincing argument. The *mere reading* of the Gospels creates in the mind of any sincere person the fullest conviction that Jesus proclaimed Himself God, equal in everything to His Father. This conviction is not merely the effect of a few isolated passages, but it is created by the whole tenor of the Sacred Books. St. John even wrote his Gospel for the special

purpose of demonstrating the *divinity of Christ* against the early heretics that denied it. St. Jerome, Tertullian, etc., assert this, and the rationalists reproach him with it. At any rate, the beginning and the ending of the work prove it sufficiently. Let us read the beginning: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. . . . And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."* (John 1, 1–14.) The conclusion is not less explicit: *"Many other signs also did Jesus in the sight of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."* (John 20, 31.)

295. II. Let us now peruse the Gospels, and amongst the great number of texts that we shall find, let us cite enough of them to confirm the affirmation of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

1. Jesus Christ claimed for Himself that which men have always, and with very good reason, considered *as belonging exclusively to God alone. "I am the way, the truth and the life."* (John 14, 6.) *"I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life."* (John 8, 12.) *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven."* (John 6, 51.) *"He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."* (John 6, 55.) *"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live."* (John 11, 25.) *"The Son of man shall send His angels and shall gather together His elect."* (Mark 13, 27.) *"The Son of man shall send His Angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all scandals and them that work iniquity."* (Matt. 13, 41.) *"For as the Father raiseth up the dead and giveth life, so the Son also giveth life to whom He will."* (John 5, 21.) *"For where there are two or three gathered in my name there am I in the midst of them."* (Matt. 18, 20.) *"Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My*

name, that will I do.'' (John 14, 13.) *''And every one that hath left house, or brethren or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, and shall possess life everlasting.''* (Matt. 19, 29.) *''What things soever the Father doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner.''* (John 5, 19.) *''If any one love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.''* (John 14, 23.) *''All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine.''* (John 16, 15.)

The Savior proclaims His divinity no less clearly when He remits sin (Luke 5, 21-24); when He declares that the Father will send the Holy Ghost in His name (John 14, 26); when He announces that He will come at the end of the world to judge the living and the dead, and render unto each according to His works. (Matt. 25, 31-46.)

If we desire to appreciate the value as proofs of these formal and multiplied declarations of the Savior, let us imagine what impression they would make on the world if they were uttered by an ordinary mortal! Would they not expose him to the contempt of mankind, if he were unable to make good his claims by irresistible evidence?

But this is not all; there are other affirmations no less decisive. Jesus called Himself *eternal. ''Before Abraham was, I am.''* (John 8, 58.) Observe the analogy between this expression and that used by David in speaking of God: *''Before the mountains were made, or the earth and the world was formed; from eternity and to eternity, thou art God.''* (Ps. 89, 2); it also recalls the sublime definition which God gives of Himself: *''I am who am.''* (Exod. 3, 14.) *''And now glorify thou me, O Father, with Thyself, with the glory which I had with Thee, before the world was.''* (John 17, 5.) He shows that He knows everything, even the most hidden secrets of the human heart. (Matt. 9, 4.) He is *omnipotent,* because it is by His own power that He will return to life. (John 10, 18.) The miracles, which He performs and which presuppose divine power, He works *in His own name and in virtue of His own inherent power.* Whilst other wonder-

workers perform miracles in the name of God, by virtue of delegated powers, it is as Sovereign Master that Jesus gives His commands to nature, to men, to angels and to demons. *"Young man, I say to thee, arise."* (Luke 7, 14.) *"I will it, be thou made clean."* (Matt. 8, 3.) *"Lazarus, come forth."* (John 11, 43), etc. This is not all; not only He exercises, according to His will, this power which is peculiar to Himself, but He commits it to others, as He sees fit; He promises to His Apostles that they shall perform in His name miracles more wonderful than those He performs Himself. (John 14, 12.)

2. Jesus proclaims clearly the *identity of His nature with that of His Father,* and at the same time He indicates the distinction of persons, and He claims the worship and honors due to God alone: *"I and the Father are one."* (John 10, 30.) He says to His Apostles: *"You believe in God, believe also in me."* (John 14, 1.) *"God has so loved the world as to give His only Son . . . that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting. He that doth not believe is already judged, because he believeth not in the name of the only Son of God."* (John 3, 16, 18.) He wishes that men should pray to Him as to the Father. (John 16, 23–24.) Whilst He proclaims the divine command: *"Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God and shall serve Him alone"* (Matt. 4, 10), He permits Himself to be adored by the man blind from birth, by the holy women, by His disciples. (John 9, 38; Matt. 38, 9-17.) He declares that all men should honor the Son, as they honor the Father. (John, 5, 23.) When Thomas, at last convinced of the truth of the Resurrection of His Master, says: *"My Lord and my God"* (John 20, 28), far from repelling these words as blasphemy, Jesus emphatically praises his faith, and blesses them who in after ages will imitate his example. (John 20, 29.)

3. Let us recall particularly some solemn occasions, when in presence either of His disciples or of His enemies, even before His judges and the great council of His nation, *Jesus proclaimed His divinity in the most explicit and formal manner.* We shall see that the very men, who pursued Him with

implacable hatred, were not in the least uncertain as to the meaning of His words.

When He was questioning His disciples as to His person: *"Whom do you say that I am?"* Simon Peter answering said: *"Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."* Far from rejecting that clear and precise declaration of faith, Jesus praised His disciple; He declares that it is His heavenly Father who had revealed to Peter these words, because He alone could have known the mystery of eternal generation. (Matt. 16, 13–17.)

On another occasion Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. The Jews, therefore, came round about Him and said to Him: *"How long dost thou hold our souls in suspense? If thou be the Christ tell us plainly."* Jesus answered them: *"I speak to you and you believe not; the works which I do in the name of my Father they give testimony of me . . . I and the Father are one."* The Jews then took up stones to stone Him, for they regarded Him as a blasphemer. Jesus, unmoved and far from retracting the open affirmation of His divinity, says to them: *"Many good works have I shown to you from my Father; for which of those works do you stone me?"* The Jews answered Him: *"For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God."* (John 10, 32–33.)

He is now brought before the Sanhedrin, the supreme and religious tribunal of the nation. The high-priest puts the question in precise unequivocal terms: *"I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us if thou be the Christ, the Son of God?"* (Matt. 26, 63–64.) And Jesus saith to Him: *"Thou hast said it."* And to confirm the categorical affirmation, He adds, *"Hereafter you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power of God and coming in the clouds of heaven."* Then the high-priest rent his garments, saying: *"He hath blasphemed, what further need have we of witnesses? Behold now, you have heard the blasphemy; what think you?"* But they answering, said: *"He is guilty of death."* (Matt. 26, 65–66.)

From this tribunal Jesus is led to that of the Roman Governor. The latter, convinced of the groundless accusations which were alleged against Him, was about to send Him away acquitted, but the chiefs of the people insisted, saying: *"We have a law, and according to the law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God."* (John 19, 7.)

On Calvary also, we hear that significant insult: *"If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross."* (Matt. 27, 40.) And those, whom the spectacle of this divine death had converted, smote their breast saying: *"Indeed this was the Son of God."* (Matt. 27, 54.) Hence it is because He proclaimed His divinity that Jesus was condemned and put to death.

296. III. Jesus did not content Himself with proclaiming His divinity; He, in support of this claim, invoked the testimony of His works; and it was by miracles, the infallible signs of truth, that He obtained belief in His words. When, for instance, the scribes and Pharisees were scandalized at Him for remitting sin, accusing Him of sacrilegious blasphemy, He merely replies: *"That you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (He saith to the sick of the palsy); I say to thee: Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house. And immediately rising up before them he took up the bed on which he lay and he went away into his own house glorifying God."* (Luke 5, 23–25.) *"Believe you not that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? Otherwise believe for the very works' sake."* (John 14, 11–12.) *"The works that I do in the name of My Father they give testimony of Me."* (John 10, 25.) *"If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not; but if I do, though you will not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me and I in the Father."* (John 10, 37–38.)

297. Remark. Jesus Christ is at one and the same time perfect God and perfect man. Equal to the Father according to His divinity, He is less than His Father according to His humanity. (John 14, 28.) Divine nature and human nature, though quite distinct, are closely united in the person of the Word. "As the rational soul and the body form one man,"

says the Athanasian creed, "so God and man are one Christ." In consequence we can and we should attribute to Jesus Christ, the God-man, all the qualities He possesses and all the works He performs in either of these two natures. It is therefore right to say at one and the same time of Jesus Christ: He is eternal, He was born, He died. These propositions do not exclude each other, because they refer to qualities belonging to these two different natures; if Jesus Christ is eternal as God, He is mortal as man. It is also because the same person is at one and the same time God and man, and Jesus, though the Son of God, could with truth call Himself the Son of man, declaring that His Father is greater than He.

It gives us pleasure to add that it is by the same law, that Mary, though a mere creature, is justly called *the Mother of God.* Evidently the blessed and the immaculate Virgin did not give birth to the divine nature, but she gave birth to *a son who is God.* It will be her eternal honor; it is also the justification of the particular homage and of the worship called *hyperdulia* rendered to her throughout all Christian countries. Why should not a disciple, a brother of Jesus Christ, place all his confidence in her, whom God has chosen and prepared to be the Mother of His beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased (Matt. 3, 17); in her whom the saints have lovingly called the *supplicating omnipotence;* in her, in fine, whom the expiring Jesus bequeathed to us as our Mother, and whom He has made so loving, so good, so merciful, that she might help us to lead holy lives and to bear in a Christian manner the inevitable pains and trials of this life and thus to attain eternal happiness in the next?

Conclusion. *Jesus Christ is therefore God* as truly as He is the Messenger of God. What are we to do but to prostrate ourselves at His feet, repeating to Him, in the transport of our hearts, overflowing with gratitude and love, the words of St. Thomas: *"My Lord and my God."* (John 20, 28.)

298. The following additional remarks will strengthen and confirm the arguments hitherto adduced to prove the divinity of Christ. I argue as follows with my attentive readers. You must grant that Jesus Christ, whose holiness was described

above (n. 290), whom we Christians worship, was not the most wicked, the most reprobate, the most impious person that ever lived on earth. Can any reasonable person, even slightly acquainted with Christ's character, refuse to concede this point to me? It is a fact that even His worst enemies, apostates, Jews and infidels, never entertained so bad an opinion of Him. On the contrary, many of His adversaries considered Him to have been a most upright teacher and very excellent man. Now this is my argument. Did not Christ always claim to be accounted God? Surely He was constantly aiming at this and framing His discourses with this view. Whatever sublime doctrine He taught, whatever wondrous miracle He performed, all was mainly directed to this paramount object. He rewarded with the most illustrious distinctions the man who openly acknowledge Him to be God, as did Peter, who was made His vicar. He publicly reproved the man who expressed some hesitation in believing the truth of His words, as did the Apostle Thomas. He asserted His divinity both in public and in private, both by words and works, so as to elicit from His enemies the well-known accusation: *"Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God."* (John 10, 33.) In the supposition of His being a rank impostor—*sit venia verbo*—what wickedness more excessive, more enormous, or more diabolical can there be than such an attempt to usurp the honors of the Godhead? And can we suppose that God Almighty would sanction by divine miracles the fraud and imposture of such an individual, and thus render inevitable the error and deception of the people believing Him? And mark well the way of His claiming the homage due to the Deity. I am aware that in former times there were others also, who aspired to a like pre-eminence, and who employed various artifices and strange devices with this end in view. Yet after all these persons aimed at getting divine worship from a limited number of men, and all for the brief space of their earthly existence; nor did they disdain to be associated with other strange gods. Christ alone would be worshipped as being the One, the Universal God. Accordingly He has condemned every other religion but His own. He has denounced every other creed,

but the one He taught. *"He that is not with me, is against me."* (Matt. 12, 30.) Nor did He demand the worship only of a single age, but of all ages; nor of a single nation, but of all nations and peoples. *"Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be condemned."* (Mark 16, 15–16.) Can it then be doubted that, unless He was the true God, He would have been the most wicked and most impious man that ever lived? But you, my esteemed readers, have already granted this to be false. It remains then that Christ is indeed the true God He declared Himself to be, and to whom we accordingly give the adoration and homage exclusively due to the Godhead. Let us then conclude that Christ is, beyond doubt, true God as He is true man. For, as it has been proved, there is no other alternative. His wickedness must either be supreme or His divinity perfectly assured. Again, if He is God, I need not labor to prove the truth of His doctrines, the power of His Sacraments, and the justice of His laws. The fact of the divinity of Him who has preached that Gospel, instituted those Sacraments, and promulgated those laws is a divine guarantee preserving us from all possibility of error. Hence it has been truly said: *Christus est solutio omnium difficultatum*—true belief in Christ is the solution of all difficulties. (See Segneri, Lenten sermon entitled: "The Truth of Christianity Demonstrated by the Divinity of Its Founder," where this argument is fully developed.)

Third Argument

The Astounding Miracles Which Christ Wrought as Irrefutable Credentials of His Godhead

299. The miracles related and described above (nn. 218–228) as the first proof of the divinity of Christ's mission, furnish, at the same time an irrefragable evidence of the divinity of His Person; hence we need not repeat them here. Referring then our readers to Chapter II of this Part V, we supplement it by the following considerations:

St. John Chrysostom wrote: "It would be the greatest miracle of all, if the world should believe without miracles," which the poet Dante has well expressed in the 24th canto of "Paradise," vv. 105–108.

For when St. Peter asked Dante how he knew the Gospel's miracles were true and divine, he answered: they converted the world to Christ.

> Se il mondo si rivolse al Cristianesmo,
> Diss' io senza miracoli, quest' uno
> E' tal che li altri non sono il centesmo.

These verses may be thus paraphrased: If the world should be converted to the Christian Faith without miracles, this would be so great a miracle, that others could not be compared with it.

The Rev. Henry Francis Cary, A.M., to whom the literary world owes the best English translation of Dante's "Divina Commedia," gives the following literal version in blank verse of Dante's famous text quoted above.

> "That all the world, said I, should have turned
> To Christian and no miracle been wrought,
> The rest were not an hundredth part so great."

300. As a fitting conclusion of the paramount question of Christ's divinity and of His heavenly mission as God's own ambassador, we here add a summary of the arguments generally adduced to prove this fundamental truth of the Christian religion, the very keystone of the arch; the whole case for Christian faith turns upon this cardinal point, and must stand or fall with it.

How easy it is for the Catholic apologist to demonstrate the absolute trustworthiness of the authority of Jesus Christ in asserting this divinity will appear from the following array of arguments which Divine Providence places at our disposal.

1. The stainlessness of His character.
2. The sublimity of His doctrines.

3. The unrivalled beauty of His moral precepts.

4. The incomparable holiness of His life.

5. The numerous miracles He wrought.

6. The fulfillment of the prophecies He made.

7. His own triumphant Resurrection and Ascension.

8. The astounding influence of His name throughout the past generations and down to the present day.

9. The wonderful spread of His teachings, so opposed to men's corrupt nature and so mysterious and humiliating to their pride and limited intellect.

10. The innumerable martyrs who died for His sake and sealed with their blood the truth of His Gospel.

11. The history of the Church He founded, teeming with numberless evidences of divine sanction and heavenly protection.

12. The unbroken succession of His vicars from St. Peter to the reigning Pontiff Pius XI.

13. The prodigious propagation of the Christian religion He founded amidst apparently insuperable obstacles.

14. Its unshaken stability and endurance in spite of the fiercest and unceasing persecutions that have assailed it.

15. The testimony of the countless millions that believed and professed the doctrine of Christ—a multitude including the wisest and purest individuals that ever lived.

16. The beatified and canonized saints, of whom the Bollandist collection alone reckons twenty-five thousand, who sanctified themselves by the perfect imitation of the examples of Christ.

17. Add to these the countless number of holy people, whose names are known to the omniscient God alone, and whose glory, now hidden, will be revealed to mankind at the last judgment.

These several arguments, fully developed in countless learned works, which fill the libraries of civilized countries in both hemispheres, furnish an overwhelming evidence of the perfect reliability of the authority of Jesus Christ, on which the truth of Christianity and all its teaching rests. Nothing more is required to demonstrate the paramount, cardinal truth

that Christ was more than a man, that He was and is the eternal Son of the living God. Whence it follows that His mission is divine, His Gospel is divine, and that consequently all His promises, as well as all His threats are true, and faithfully fulfilled.

Even if it were true that modern scientists stand as one man against Christianity, this would not disprove its truth. But what are the real facts as stated in contemporary history? Is it true that the overwhelming majority of men of science are confessed unbelievers, rejecting God's revelation, the divinity of Christ and the Christian religion? The contrary is the exact truth. We here append, in alphabetical order, a long list of the names of both Catholic and non-Catholic scientists, who in modern times have distinguished themselves in the cultivation of the various branches of natural science, and who remained staunch believers in Christianity, and its fundamental truths, such as the existence of the Creator and Ruler of the universe, the immortality of the human soul, man's moral accountability, and the reality of future retribution. Many such conspicuous writers have already been referred to in Parts I and II of this course, and additional names will be quoted in Part X of the second volume.

For the authentic and trustworthy collection here listed we are indebted to the following authorities:

(*a*) "The Catholic Encyclopedia," a masterly, monumental work; (*b*) "Christianity and Leaders of Modern Science," by Karl A. Kneller, S.J. (B. Herder, St. Louis, Mo.); (*c*) "Religious Beliefs of Scientists," by Arthur H. Tabrum (Hunter and Longhurst, London, England); (*d*) "Religion and Science," by Maurice Ronayne, S.J. (Peter F. Collier, New York); (*e*) "The Catholic Church and Science," by Rev. J. Zahm, C.S.C. (Notre Dame University, Indiana).

THE ROLL OF HONOR

301. Abbadie; Agassiz; Altum; Ampère; Arago; Avogadro.

Babinet; Baer; Barrande; Baum; Baumgartner; Beaumont; Becquerel; Bell; Beneden; Bernard; Berzelius; Bessel; Bendant; Billinger; Binet; Biot; Bischoff, K.; Bischoff, T.; Blainville; Boerhaave; Bois-Reymond; Boissier; Bolyai; Boncompagni; Boscovich; Bossat; Boule; Boyle; Brandes; Braum; Brewster; Bridgewater; Brossyniart; Buckland.

Cameron; Carony; Castracane; Cauchy; Cecchi; Chaptal; Chevreul; Conybeare; Copernicus; Coulomb; Cuvier.

Dalton; Dana; Daguerre; Daniel; Daubrie; David; Davy; Dawson; Deusson; Dechen; De Lue; Descattes; Delessert; Denza; Desains; Despretz; Devitte, C.; Devitte, H.; Drobisch; Droste-Hülshoff; Dumas; Dumont; Dupin; Dupuytren.

Egerton; Ehrenberg; Elie de Beaumont; Enche; Escher; Eschricht; Euler.

Faraday; Faye; Fizeau; Florens; Fontenelle; Forster; Foucault; Frass; Franklin; Fraunhofer; Fresenius; Fresnel; Freycinet; Friedel; Fuchs.

Galileo; Galvani; Gassendi; Gandry; Gauss; Gautier; Geinitz; Geoffroy-Saint-Hilaire; Gergonne; Gilbert; Gisnies; Grumme; Grimaldi; Grassman; Gray, Asa; Gruner.

Halle; Haller; Hanstein; Hausmann; Haug; Hauy; Heer; Heinrich; Heis; Henry; Hermite; Herschel, J. F. W.; Hertz; Hende; Hirn; Hitchcock; Hladnik; Hufeland; Hyrtl.

Inghirami.

Jolly; Joule; Jussieu.

Klaproth; Koller; Kepler; Ketteler; Kickmeyer; Kircher; Kelvin, Lord; Kreil; Kronig.

Labord; Lacordaire; Laënnec; Lamarck; Lamont; Laplace; Lapparent, Larrey, Lutreille, Lavoisier, Leibnitz; Leseur; Leunis; Leverrier; Liebig; Link; Linnæus; Lossen; Lyell.

MacCulloch; Madter; Mallard; Malpighi; Mariotte; Martius; Maury; Maxwell; Mayer, R.; Merian; Mendel; Miller; Milne; Muller, F.; Muller, J.; Murchison, J.

Newton.

Oersted; Ohm; Olbers; Omalius; Oriani; Owen; Ozanam.

Paley; Palmieri; Parlatore; Pascal; Pasteur; Pelletier; Pelouse; Perry; Pfaff, F.; Pfaff, J.; Piazzi; Plana; Plateau; Poinsot; Puiseux.

Quatrefages; Quenstedt.

Rath; Rauener; Rayleigh, Lord; Rebeur-Taschwitz; Regnault; Reichenbach; Relshuber; Respeghi; Riemann; De la Rive; Rollet; Romanes; Rontgen; Ruete; Rumford; Ruitimeyer.

Santini; Schäfhautl; Schwann; Secchi; Schimper; Schnizlein; Schoubein; Schrank; Schubert; De Serres; Siemens, W.; Simpson; Spiess; Spring; Stark; Stensen; Stokes; Stoppani; Studer.

Tart; Tennyson; Thenard; Torricelli; Triesnecker.

Vauquelin; Vicaire; De Vico; Vierordt; Volkmann, A. A.; Volkmann, R.; Volta.

Waagen; Wagner; Weber; Westermaier; Whewell; Wigard; Wolfe; Woods; Wurtz.

If any of our readers should wish to be convinced of the fact that the authors contained in our list are really entitled to a place of honor as distinguished cultivators of the natural sciences, they may easily do so by securing a copy of Father Kneller's valuable work, cited above, in whose pages they will find a full account of their achievements in their respective fields of scientific investigation.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY OF THE TEN PROOFS AND CONCLUSION OF PART V

302. The Christian Religion is Divine. We have set forth some of the fundamental proofs of the Christian religion. The cogency of these proofs, even if taken singly and alone, is such as to ensure the assent of every upright and sincere mind. To prove a truth in whatever field of knowl-

edge *a single good argument* is required; when such an argument exists, so long as it is not refuted, all objections are necessarily without value; they can only be *specious* objections. Now there are in favor of the divinity of the Christian religion a great number of proofs drawn from most varied sources, each one of which possesses great convincing force. What conviction should they bring when we consider them, as we should consider them, in their magnificent aggregation and cumulative force, all tending to the same conclusion?

It is evident that our limited space will not allow us to refer to all the objections, which successive opponents for the last nineteen hundred years have raised against Christianity, its Founder and His Gospel, a fact that need not surprise us for the holy old man Simeon, as St. Luke relates (2, 34), said prophetically of Christ: *"This child is set up for a sign which shall be contradicted."* A considerable number of such difficulties are answered in this volume, and many others will be solved in the next.

303. We are not bound to solve all the difficulties that may be urged against a given thesis, which has been thoroughly proved by such arguments as cannot be refuted. Even in matters of physical science no one expects such a defense. There are difficulties against Newton's law of gravitation, which have not as yet been solved; yet no one thinks of doubting the existence of that law, or the truth of the facts, which it satisfactorily accounts for. If the objection amounted to an evident demonstration that a certain proposition was self-contradictory, that is to say, in the language of the Schools, impossible and absurd, we should then be obliged to abandon the thesis. But if the difficulty is plainly one, which we cannot solve simply for want of information, right reason will only bid us wait for more light, but will not compel us to abandon, deny or doubt the proposition of which there is question. Joseph de Maistre, the renowned French statesman, writes: "When a truth of the natural order or a dogma of divine revelation is thoroughly demonstrated, no objection, however forcible, can disprove it. For, so long as the arguments, on which the demonstration is based, are not refuted,

the truth remains untouched and all the difficulties raised against it, if they cannot be completely answered, will simply prove the incapacity of our mind, but they cannot convince us of the error of the doctrine or fact concerned." (Vol. I, 256.) As Cardinal Newman says in his "Grammar of Assent," "Ten thousand difficulties do not make a doubt."

304. How can any man *reasonably* doubt the divinity of a religion in whose favor there can be brought forth such arguments as the following: the universal expectation of the ages before the Christian era; the whole history of the Jewish people; the fulfillment of the promises, prophecies and figures that predicted and foreshadowed its coming; the excellence of the evangelical doctrine; the saintly life of its Author; the great number of His miracles and prophecies; His undoubted Resurrection; the no less wonderful works of His Apostles and disciples, to whom He had promised that power; the establishment, propagation and preservation of the religion He founded, which cannot be explained by any human means; the conversion of the world to this religion, which runs counter to all the dominant passions and ideas; the transformation of civil society, its laws and public morality; the never-ceasing testimony of the martyrs of all Christian ages; the assent of the greatest geniuses the earth has ever produced; the adoration and the love of the noblest hearts; the fruits of life produced in men's souls under the breath and inspiration of the Gospels; the innumerable prodigies of humility, charity, purity, abnegation, which the world could never have imagined, and much less produced; the successive defeat of all adverse systems and hostile men; the revival of faith and piety in spite of the fiercest attacks of the most arrogant infidelity; Christianity finding new life in the midst of persistent persecution; the unexpected reaction and general return to the Faith every time that its cause seemed to be lost.

Does not this overwhelming combination of proofs form the most striking demonstration of the divine foundation of our Faith, and does it not more than justify the belief of the numberless generations that have taken the Cross for their standard? (Mgr. Pie, "Third Syn. Instr.," vol. I.) If such

arguments only establish a colossal error, which for centuries has brought the more civilized part of mankind and its greatest geniuses to the feet of an infamous impostor, what are we to think of the wisdom and goodness of God? God is wise and good; that is why He has prepared for us these numerous and most convincing proofs. He wished that we should give to His revelation not a blind and rash assent, but one *eminently reasonable and worthy of Him.* "*Your reasonable service,*" says St. Paul. (Rom. 12, 1.) Here we may justly exclaim with the royal prophet: "*Thy testimonies, O Lord, are become exceedingly credible.*" (Ps. 92, 5.) (Part V, ch. II.)

305. 2. The Christian Religion Is Obligatory for All Men unto the End of Time. For the *same facts* which prove that God has placed Himself by His incarnate Son in direct and immediate relation with man, compel us to acknowledge the strict obligation under which we are to enter into this order of grace preparatory to that of glory. In making us His children by adoption and the heirs of heaven, God performed an act of love, which was at the same time an act of *authority.* As *Sovereign* Master He wills that as He gives, so we should accept what He gives, and He will not permit us to despise and refuse the gifts of His bounty; His infinite Majesty cannot renounce the glory which He expects from man, His privileged creature. As Catholic truth teaches us, free creatures cannot deprive God of His extrinsic glory resulting from the external manifestation of His divine attributes and perfections. Man can only choose, by the legitimate or illegitimate use of his liberty, his own manner of glorifying God. For either He tends to his destiny, eternal happiness, by obedience to God's holy law, and he thus glorifies His infinite goodness, bounty and liberality, and by so doing he secures his true happiness both here and hereafter; or he spurns the invitation and commands of his Supreme Master, and by incurring the merited punishment in the next world, he will, in spite of himself, glorify the justice and power of his Sovereign Creator and Judge. We may indeed escape the dominion of men, but how shall we escape the dominion of God? Willing or unwilling, we must submit to it, and concur to the procla-

mation of His glory. We must live either under the empire of His love, or under that of His justice. We must either glorify His mercy and goodness by free obedience, or we must glorify His power and justice by inevitable punishment. This salutary thought is tersely expressed by St. Anselm in his famous work, "Cur Deus homo." "God," he says, "cannot possibly lose His honor, or forfeit His glory: for either man spontaneously gives to God the glory he owes Him, by obedience to His holy law, or God exacts it from him in spite of his rebellious will." Thus if the obstinate sinner chooses to fly from under the will of God *commanding,* he will fall under the divine will *punishing.*

306. Moreover, our supernatural regeneration has *cost* the Son of God too dearly to allow men to believe with impunity that the profession of the religion, which assures us the benefits of Redemption by applying to us the merits of the blood shed on Calvary, should be purely optional. "To enlighten the world Jesus Christ has left a symbol, a creed; to guide it, commands; to sanctify it, the Sacraments, a sacrifice, a priesthood; to govern it until the end of time, He appointed His representatives or vicars on earth. Thirty-three years were consecrated to this great work, which was completed only on the painful tree of the Cross. Would it be allowable for us, whilst yet aspiring to our destiny in heaven, to refuse to see that the symbol means for us the dogmas to be believed, the decalogue traces the rule of our life, the Cross reminds us of the great sacrifice offered for our redemption, and the Church is the divine institution established for the preservation and communication of the means of salvation? To deny these truths is supreme folly and inexcusable obstinacy."

Besides, the *will* of the divine Legislator is manifested to us with such clearness as to leave no room for doubt. At the moment when He was about to depart from the earth, Jesus Christ said to His Apostles: *"Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned."* (Mark 16, 15–16.) *"God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in*

Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God sent not His Son into the world, to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by Him. He that believeth in Him is not judged. But he that doth not believe, is already judged, because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3, 16–18.) "*God,*" says St. Paul, "*also hath exalted Him (His Son), and hath given Him a name which is above all names; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father.*" (Phil. 2, 9–11.) "*For there is one God and one mediator of God and men, the man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a redemption for all.*" (I Tim. 2, 5–6.) "*This* (Jesus Christ) *is the stone which . . . is become the head of the corner; nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved.*" (Acts 4, 11–12.) See "Select Sermons" of Rev. N. T. MacCarthy, S.J., translated by D. Mahoney, Esq.: "The Folly, the Guilt, and the Misery of the Infidel." Dublin, 1881, James Duffy and Sons. Essay on "Indifference in Matters of Religion," by Abbé F. De Lammenais (written before his sad apostasy), translated by Lord Stanley of Alderley; London, 1895, John Macqueen. N.B. This work must be read with caution, as it already contains the seeds of his later errors, pointed out by Pope Gregory XVI in his encyclical letter of August 15, 1832.

3. The greatest and best of civilized mankind have believed in the divinity of the Christian religion. However, there are men, even learned men, to be met with who live voluntarily outside of all revealed religion, and who go so far as to profess an abject and destructive materialism. How can we explain this deplorable blindness? The causes are various; they may be found set forth in many works, particularly in that of Abbé Caussette, "Le bons sens de la foi" (The common sense of faith); in that of Mgr. Baunard, "Le doute et ses victimes dans le siècle présent" (Doubt and its victims in the present century); in that of Mgr. Laforet, "Pourquoi l'on ne croit pas" (Why men do not believe); in a conference of Frays-

sinous, "Les causes de l'incrédulité chez les jeunes gens" (The causes of unbelief among young people), and in the 2nd Conference of Father Félix on purity (1861).

Undoubtedly ignorance in matters of religion is, in our day, one of the chief causes of unbelief. But *among young men* brought up with religious ideas, the most ordinary cause of the loss of faith is *corruption of morals.* What prevents men from seeing clearly in the things of God, says Mgr. Freppel, is the domination of the senses over the mind. The passions are like thick vapors, which rise from the depths of conscience and place themselves between the eyes of the soul and the sun of truth. Let this veil be rent asunder; let the light reappear, and religion shows itself in all the splendor of its incomparable certainty. Religion, we know, puts a curb upon the passions of man; it commands him to master his senses and not allow himself to be enslaved by them. This is what is feared in religion, what irritates men, what hangs heavy over them; men affect not to believe in religion, *that they may dispense themselves from doing what it commands.* It was Euler who pronounced these words, which have remained famous: "If the theorems of Euclid were at the same time precepts of morality, they would have been denied long ago" (nn. 37, 38).

307. However, great minds are often united to noble hearts. Thus, in every century, the greatest men were men of faith, and sincere Christians. Surely no one will accuse of mental weakness such men as Athenagoras, Arnobius, Epiphanes, Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Minutius Felix, Cyprian, Gregory, Cyril, Ambrose, Augustine, who, in the first ages of the Church, have believed with an ardent faith and have displayed rare eloquence in the defense of their faith. Who would attribute credulity to such men as Albert the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure, St. Anselm, Dante, Bossuet, Fénelon, Malebranche, Bacon, Descartes, Newton, Leibnitz, Euler, and a countless multitude of others, who have made the Christian truths the object of their belief, admiration and practice?

And our century, so justly proud of its wonderful dis-

coveries, does it not show a multitude of learned men who have never ceased to give full assent to revealed truths? Hence it is with legitimate pride that every Christian can and should apply to himself these words of the illustrious mathematician Cauchy: "I am a *Christian,* that is, I believe in the Divinity of Jesus Christ, with Tycho-Brahe, Copernicus, Descartes, Newton, Fermat, Leibnitz, Pascal, Grimaldi, Euler, Guldin, Boscowich, Gerdil, with all the great astronomers, all the great physicists, all the great geometricians of past centuries. I am even a *Catholic,* like the majority of them, and if anyone asked the reason therefor, I would give it willingly. It would then be seen that my convictions are the result, not of inherited prejudices, but of a deep and honest examination. I am a sincere Catholic, as were Corneille, Racine, La Bruyère, Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Fénelon, as have been and still continue to be a great number of the most distinguished men of our times, men who have done the greatest honor to science, philosophy, literature, who have done the most to illustrate our great academies and universities. I share the profound convictions which so many scientific men of the first rank have displayed by their words, their actions and their writings."

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END OF FIRST FIVE PARTS AND OF VOLUME I

Defense of Christian Doctrine against Its Opponents

Chief Purpose Aimed at in Each Part

Part I. Refutation of Atheists, Agnostics, and Pantheists.

Part II. Refutation of Materialists and Determinists.

Part III. Refutation of Rationalists.

Part IV. Refutation of Deists, Unorthodox Evolutionists and Higher Critics.

Part V. Refutation of Judaism, Unitarianism and all Religions opposed to Christianity.

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